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Life and Letters

The Ignorant Man's Guide to Serious Music

ARISTIDES

My title is a bit askew. The ignorant man, it turns out, *is* the guide, and that benighted fellow is I. I have been listening to serious music—the traditional word, *classical*, seems to me inept—for a number of decades and with increasing interest and intensity as I grow older. I have also begun to read more and more about music, in the form of criticism, memoirs, letters, biographies, and autobiographies of composers and performers. I currently read more about music than about any other single subject. When I go into a used-book store, I go directly to the music section. I attend probably some twenty or so concerts a year. The four radios in our apartment are pre-set to our city's two serious-music stations. So, too, is the radio in our car, though in the car I more often listen to music on cassette tapes. (The other day I came very close to getting a speeding ticket when carried away by a Herbert von Karajan recording of the *Eroica*.) I have become passionate about music, really quite bonkers about it, but—and here's the catch—without becoming particularly intelligent or sophisticated about it. My condition resembles that of an adolescent greatly stirred by love without in the least understanding it. The difference is that the adolescent figures eventually to grow out of his condition, but I don't figure, ever, to grow out of mine.

It may be that I came to music too late. The home I grew up in was not one in which music had much part. My deprivation was not so drastic as that of President U. S. Grant, who claimed to know only two tunes: "One of them is 'Yankee Doodle'; and the other isn't." But I cannot recall my mother ever singing or humming a tune. My father would occasionally sing, while shaving, a song from his youth called "Anybody Here Seen Kelly?" ("Kelly," I believe the second line went, "of the Emerald Isle"). My father was also partial to the songs of Stephen Foster, and we owned an album of Bing Crosby singing Stephen Foster songs. But the height of musical culture in the milieu in which I grew up was musical comedy. My parents went to their share of these. They were not, however, fanatical about them, as some of my friends' parents were, traveling to New York to see a musical comedy, then seeing it again when it played in Chicago, then buying the record to play at home, often over and over again. Men who worked very hard at very tough businesses seemed to be able to derive immense pleasure out of what seemed to me, even as a boy, an astonishingly trivial entertainment. Yet there they would be, at considerable cost and no small inconvenience, after a day battling in the marketplace, watching for the second or third time such shows as *The Most Happy Fella* or *Pajama Game*, smiles of deeply contented idiocy on their faces.

If I had any genius, or even a spark of talent, for music—and I had neither—it would doubtless have shown itself, whatever the conditions of my upbringing. Alongside the intensely musical families of the Bachs, the Haydns, the Mozarts, there have been musicians—Handel, Debussy, Myra Hess—who were the sole members of their families to show musical ability, and they proceeded quite nicely, thank you very much, to make their way without family understanding or guidance. In the Chicago public school system, when I was a boy in the 1940s, there were opportunities for musical talent to show itself. In the early grades—second perhaps, or possibly third—a man came around offering lessons for various instruments; the lessons were twenty-five cents each, and one could rent the instruments (save a piano) until such time as one cared to buy one's own. (Tap

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dancing lessons were also offered, at the same price.) I informed my mother that I wouldn't mind playing the piano (an instrument we did not have) or the trumpet (an instrument that would have been cause for eviction). My mother suggested the violin—the Jewish instrument par excellence, as the pianist Artur Schnabel was once told by an Israeli in explanation of the merely mildly enthusiastic response that Schnabel's own playing received in Israel. Even then, at age seven or eight, I did not see myself playing the violin (today I see myself playing any instrument but the bassoon) and so the conversation was dropped. Dropped, too, was the prospect of my getting a grounding in music, which I now, in my keen yet bumbling appreciation of serious music, greatly regret.

I endured without anything like sustained contact with serious music for at least the following decade. In my circle of friends and classmates, piano lessons seemed to be chiefly for girls and represented, as near as I could make out, a pretense of culture and an attempt to instill breeding. Those boys among my friends who, as the phrase is, "took" piano, had "put it back" by early adolescence. I attended no concerts, though once I was taken, by my mother, to a puppet opera, with a full puppet orchestra, the ingenuity of which so impressed me that I never bothered to learn who wrote the opera and scarcely heard the music. We had a high school chorus, but it held no attraction for me. I listened to the popular songs of the day—a less illustrious day than that which produced George Gershwin, Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, and Jerome Kern—and owe a small debt of gratitude to Messrs. Nat King Cole and Frank Sinatra for helping me to attain what little success I had with girls in my adolescence. I used to pride myself on knowing the current top ten or twenty songs, until the age of rock descended, locust-like, over the land, replacing the sentimentality, triviality, and self-pity of most popular songs with the unintelligible violence of primitive rhythms funneled through heavy electrical amplification. "Roll over Beethoven and tell Tchaikovsky the news," one early rock tune had it, and the news, for those of us not brought up on it, was not good: it was that rock 'n roll was here to stay, which in fact, in various permutations, it has.

Apart from some grammar school teaching of scales and keys, the first, and only, instruction in music I had came in a university course in the humanities that sought to demonstrate the affinities among the arts of literature, painting, and music. I say "sought" advisedly, for I never found any of these affinities very cogent. In the study of painting, slides of great masterworks were shown, and the instructor, pointer in hand, told us where, owing to the composition of the painting, our eye purportedly went. Only my eye never seemed to go where his did. In music, he would earnestly point out the statement of a theme, then note its recurrence. Only my ear never heard it. Where exactly my eye went, or what roughly my ear heard, I am not at all certain. But with the sinking heart that appeared to be a standard side effect of so much of my formal education, I knew that I should have to find my own way in music and art as I had already begun to do in literature and politics and love and everything else of interest and importance in life.

The one thing this course did was to inspire me to buy my first album of serious music. It was a recording of Haydn's *Surprise* Symphony. I spent a fair amount of time listening to it, doubtless missing its theme and the recurrences of its theme each time, but nonetheless feeling an immediate and immense pleasure merely hearing it and allowing the music to wash over me. I'm quite sure I never asked what the music meant, how close to the truth it came, or even if it was well played. I was along for the ride, and it was a lovely one.

But the hook wasn't really in. I spent little time listening to music after college, apart from a passing interest in jazz and an even more fleeting interest in folk singing. As for serious music, I could take it or leave it, and apparently found it much easier to leave it. I went to a concert every now and then, though more for social than musical reasons. Once or twice I drove out to the Ravinia summer music festival outside Chicago, and on one occasion, at a free concert in Grant Park while on a date, I fell asleep on the grass, awaking with a portion of that day's *Chicago Tribune* front page imprinted on my right cheek and forehead—a condition from which not even Frank Sinatra or Nat Cole could redeem me.

I am someone for whom his twenties remain a blur. Army, marriage, children, living in three different cities, having six different jobs, on fire with ambition, it all flew by, *allegro agitato*. Serious music played no part

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in it. Such music, after all, requires time—or, more precisely, repose—which I didn't seem to have. The only music I had time for was that which comes under the category of noise pollution, the popular songs of the kind that one has to live a life of some purity in America not to know. Such songs still permeated my consciousness, for I recall, out of the blur of this time, standing up at my desk in the office of a small New York magazine, about to edit the prose, sadly convoluted by a stroke late in life, of Reinhold Niebuhr, and singing, "C'mon, Reiny, let's do the twist."

In my thirty-third year I had half-season tickets, in the mezzanine, to the home games of the Chicago Bulls and full-season tickets, in the balcony, to the Chicago Fine Arts Quartet. About the quintet in shorts I knew much more than I did about the quartet in dinner jackets. The moves of the latter, though less spectacular than those of the former, were nonetheless more intricate and, in the fullness of time, came to seem to me more interesting. A taste for chamber music generally began to develop in me. Limited though my musical experience was, I found chamber music more pleasurable than symphonic music—and also, somehow, purer. This was partly because I found it much easier to concentrate on music played by fewer instruments; and partly because music is better imbibed, at least for me, without the mediation of one of "those good dancers," as the conductor Roger Désmorière described conductors in the style of the late Leonard Bernstein. But in the main I found chamber music more enjoyable because I could follow it more readily; for, as Homer Ulrich puts it in his book *Chamber Music: The Growth and Practice of an Intimate Art*: "In chamber music there is room only for essentials, all mere padding is avoided. One is aware of the musical essence, of the composer's inmost intentions."

But now that I have just quoted this, it occurs to me that I have only the foggiest notion of what the key phrases "musical essence" and "the composer's inmost intentions" can possibly mean. Yet I want to believe in them. I am all for the notion that music has an "essence" and that composers have "inmost intentions." The problem is that some of the most serious musicians appear to argue otherwise. Stravinsky, the most impressive of modern composers, has remarked of his methods of composition: "Something comes into my ear and I write it down." Stravinsky also said that all literary descriptions of musical form are misleading, and he was, after all, in a position to know. And yet I find myself struggling against the notion that music is without meaning—is, as Santayana says, "essentially useless, as life is." If I believed with Santayana that life is useless, I suppose I should have to agree that so is music. It would remove a certain amount of pressure from daily living if one could believe such things—"If that's all there is, my dear," as a popular song, sung by Peggy Lee, has it, "then let's keep dancing"—but I cannot.

Someone authoritative—an important composer, perhaps a great music critic, I don't recall—once said that every other word a literary man writes on the subject of music is almost certain to be wrong. Maybe the reason I do not recall who said it is that, as they say in the head trades, I am blocking it out, for I have grave suspicions that it may be true, and this is more than a little daunting to a literary man setting out to record even his confusions about the subject. To be sure, some esteemed literary men and women found that they did better to take a pass on music altogether. Charles Lamb, allowing that he had a tin ear, wrote that a carpenter's hammering on a summer day was to him as nothing compared to "the measured malice of music." Yet Lamb must have had doubts, the feeling that he was perhaps missing out on something extraordinary if not glorious, for the first lines of his poem "Free Thoughts on Several Eminent Composers" read:

> Some cry up Haydn, some Mozart,
> Just as the whim bites. For my part,
> I do not care a farthing candle
> For either of them nor for Handel.
> Cannot a man live free and easy,
> Without admiring Pergolesi?

Samuel Johnson appears to have had no such compunction. Music, he said, "excites in my mind no ideas, and hinders me from contemplating my own." The Reverend Sydney Smith had no taste for long musical evenings, and he particularly detested oratorios: "Nothing can be more disgusting than an Oratorio," he wrote. "How absurd to see 500 people fiddling like madmen about the Israelites in the Red Sea!" Rather more surprising—at

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least it was to me—is George Eliot, who I should have thought would have been delighted by the majestic mysteries of music, but who, as it turns out, pronounced that "music sweeps by me like a messenger carrying a message that is not for me." My own position, and situation, is closer to that described by Coleridge: "An ear for music is a very different thing from a taste for music. I have no ear whatever; I could not sing an air to save my life; but I have the intensest delight in music, and can detect good from bad."

At least I think I can detect the difference between good and bad music, though sometimes I have my doubts. I like so much music, and—worse news yet—am regularly finding still more to like. The other night, for example, at a concert of baroque music, I heard a Sinfonia for Two Trumpets in D Major by Giuseppi Torelli. It was too brief, but what there was of it was, to use an elevated critical term, swell. I had not hitherto heard of Torelli (1658–1709), a Bolognese not to be confused with Gasparo Torelli, a Paduan who worked more than a century earlier. It seems that Giuseppi wrote some 150 instrumental works—I am lifting all this from *The Norton/Grove Concise Encyclopedia of Music*—that show "experimental steps towards concerto scoring and ritornello form." This Torelli was, musically, apparently no ordinary Giuseppi. Yet, I am reasonably certain, a month from now I shall have quite forgotten his name. And how many Torelli-like composers are there in other nationalities?

One of the first things the aspiring music amateur—aspiring, that is, to gain some modest grasp upon the general subject—is confronted with is the sheer vastness of music. Ernest Newman, the fine English music critic, noted that, when he set out to fill in his own musical education, he gave himself three or four years to complete the job. "I did not realize," Newman wrote, "that of all students the student of music has the heaviest task." Apart from the continuous flow of contemporary music, he discovered, he was unaware of how much interesting music lay off the beaten track: what I think of as the Torelli factor. As Newman went on to recount, students of literature are generally required to know the literature of their own and perhaps one other country along with a smattering of that of other European countries. "But the student of music has to know the music of at least half a dozen countries as well as he knows the music of any one of them." This is in part owing to the obvious point that music, having no language, has no geographical boundaries. Yet it is also owing to the unprovable but I believe true point that there is in the world a great deal more good music than there is good literature or painting. Painters and writers roughly equivalent to Giuseppi Torelli probably aren't worth reading or looking at to the same degree that he is worth listening to.

Despite the current academic ruckus about what works ought to be taught in the college curriculum—the debate, as it is charmingly termed, over "canonicity"—wake even a true-believing Marxico-hystericist-structuralesque critic at 3:00 A.M., put a cold gun to his temple, inform him that you ain't fooling around, and he is likely to be able to deliver on demand a fairly sensible list of books that a person ought to read who wishes to consider himself educated. The list is likely to be one to which, with a qualification here and there, most people would agree. But I doubt if a similar list can be composed for music. For one thing, to have heard a work of music isn't comparable to having read a work of literature; certainly not having heard it only once or twice, it isn't. For another, one can say one has read Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, and it means something; but to say one has heard Bach, Mozart, Beethoven doesn't seem to carry anything like the same weight. It even sounds a bit stupid; something about their music seems bottomless, endless (and I do not speak of the vast quantities of it), subject neither to convincing final interpretation nor to true intellectual possession.

Still, I suppose people who know music well could agree on what constitutes the musical equivalent of what today we wrongly call "literacy" when we really mean proficiency. A reasonable proficiency in musical knowledge would doubtless include the major works of Beethoven (did he write any minor ones, it occurs to me naively to inquire), much of Bach, Mozart, Haydn, Handel, Schubert, Berlioz, Chopin, Brahms, Schumann, Tchaikovsky. Less but still substantial amounts would need to be added of Debussy, Ravel, Rachmaninoff, and Stravinsky. Palestrina, Telemann, Vivaldi, and Scarlatti, Bruckner, Mahler, and Schönberg, and the immense array of impressive composers in between and

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the interesting ones who came after—these, too, would be in the musical core curriculum. I have not mentioned composers who wrote chiefly for opera—and the always special case of Wagner—but then one has only to mention the name of one composer for three others whose music is possibly better to spring to mind. It's a thick jungle of notes, a rolling sea of sound out there in which one can get so easily lost, or drowned—that is, if one comes to it fairly late in life, greedy to hear, enjoy, understand it all.

Not that it really takes that much to make me feel musically lost, drowned, completely overwhelmed. I have, to begin with, an astonishing musical memory—there is no piece of serious music, I have discovered, that I am incapable of mis-identifying or forgetting altogether. This power seems to grow in me. The other morning it was a large portion of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* heard over the radio that I could not identify. A week or so before, I had pressed my fists against my forehead as an aid to recalling what turned out to be a segment of Schubert's *Trout*, which I have heard countless times and adore. No doubt I shall end up by not recognizing the opening notes of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. It goes without saying that I cannot call up musical passages whenever I wish either, although they do have an odd way of showing up when not required. I shall be sitting in a concert listening to a Schumann piano work when my mind suddenly fills with the dramatic third movement *(allegro giocoso)* of Brahms's Violin Concerto. More often, though, I hear something I have heard several times before, am really quite fond of—Mendelssohn's entirely distinctive *Italian* Symphony, to cite another recent example—and cannot call up title or composer. Why is this? Why should this be? I begin to believe that the joke here is that I am uniquely unfit for something I so much love, a charmless and not particularly intelligent dwarf in pursuit of Sophia Loren.

Not only do I not remember music, except inconveniently, but I do not talk about it at all well. In fact, I talk about it very little. Music is a sonic event, air in motion, sounds neatly timed; and I find that after I have heard it I have little to say—and the more moved I am by a piece of music, the less I seem to have to say. The composer Ned Rorem has remarked that "the effect [of the best music criticism] is accomplished by description, not opinion. If description is accurate, opinion cannot but simmer through and not be strained for." To describe music one must fall back fairly fast on metaphor; certainly this is true for those of us unfitted for talking about music technically. Rorem is himself not bad with musical metaphor, as when he writes about the pianist Paul Jacobs: "Of the three innately good piano sounds, steel and gold and silver, Paul Jacobs's is silver, as befits the *Études*." Virgil Thomson claimed that his method in writing about music "was to seek out the precise adjective," which he could do with nearly unfailing deftness. I am generally not a bad metaphor man myself, and I don't recall ever feeling wanting in the realm of adjectives. Yet in attempting to describe music I have only to open my mouth and such metaphorical power as I have departs the room and I find myself adjectivally costive. Music leaves me, otherwise a fairly garrulous character, strangely silent.

If I believed in reincarnation, I should like to return to earth as Donald Francis Tovey, the English composer, pianist, and critic, who could do musically all those things I can only dream of doing: make music, play music, discuss music divinely well. As with so many greatly talented musicians, Tovey (1875–1940) came into the world loaded down with gifts. Mary Grierson's admiring biography of Tovey begins with the following anecdote:

> There was a sound of clapping in the next room, and Miss Weisse went to the door to look in. A small boy of 10 was applauding vigorously, and the score of a Haydn Quartet which he had just finished reading was laying on the table in front of him. He looked up in confusion and said, "Oh, I beg your pardon, I thought I *heard* it."

Even for a musician, Donald Tovey had an unusually musical mind. "It is doubtful," Miss Grierson writes, "whether to the end of his life he ever realized that the faculty which he already possessed at the age of 12 for reading a musical score as easily as the average person reads a book (and generally with a much more accurate memory of its contents) is a faculty which, if acquired at all, costs most musicians years of practice." So musical was Tovey that, when reading philosophy as a student at Balliol College, Oxford, he once regretted that he could not read Plato as simply as he read Bach, but added that he fre-

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quently caught himself solving some problem of a philosophical nature "in, say, the key of A minor, where I had utterly failed to reason it out in words." As for musical memory, a Cambridge don once asked Tovey how long it would take him to play every composition he knew by heart, playing eight hours a day. "Oh, about four weeks," Tovey said at first, then revised the figure: "No, I think it would take eight weeks, or seven at least." Never known as a braggart, or for being even mildly boastful, Tovey, one must conclude, truly did have seven or eight weeks of music stored in his head.

Donald Tovey was not, I suppose, all that wildly precocious, given the astonishing youthfulness at which many musicians brought off extraordinary accomplishments. Mozart is of course the most famous, if not slightly freakish, case. But there is also Schubert, about whom it is written, in the *Pelican Book of Chamber Music*, that "from the age of thirteen he wrote, or at any rate started, two or more chamber works every year until 1817, when he achieved full mastery of the medium." In 1817 Schubert was twenty; when I was twenty I am not certain that I had mastery over my hair. But then musicians seem to be on different clocks and calendars than the rest of us. In reading the memoirs of such performers as Artur Rubinstein and Artur Schnabel and Nathan Milstein, one cannot help but be impressed by how early they were on their own and how little they received in the way of formal education. Rubinstein and Schnabel and Milstein were loosed on the world while still essentially children, under the most minimal supervision, playing in backwater towns, often under extremely crude conditions, making their own way, and somehow coming through it intact, highly intelligent, and often with a clear perspective on the human comedy.

The early maturity conferred on musicians is another of the mysteries of music. If there are no Mozarts in literature—no one has produced at so high a level so young—there are Goethes in music (one thinks right off of Beethoven's late quartets). What music doesn't seem to have is any Joseph Conrads—that is, men or women who come to it only fairly late in life, as Conrad came to literature, publishing his first novel at age thirty-nine, and who begin to succeed in early middle age. In literature one almost always has to wait until one's talent ripens; painting, I gather, is not so very different. But in music one generally knows, and knows early, whether or not one has it—the magic *it*—before one is twenty. One can be good and get better, obviously, but one is quite unlikely suddenly, at the age of forty, to become good.

Hard work, as in all the arts, means a great deal. "How do you get to Carnegie Hall?" a tourist asks a New Yorker in an old joke. "Practice, practice, practice" is the response. A friend of mine, once a piano prodigy, recalls as a small boy listening to President Roosevelt speak over the radio at the beginning of World War II on the need for every American to do his job for the war effort, and his mother afterwards remarking to him that his job during the war was to practice piano even harder. But hard work is not fundamental—talent is. Somerset Maugham's magnificent story "The Alien Corn" illustrates the point unforgettably. "What is it you want me to tell you?" asks the pianist in the story who is called in to judge the talent of George Bland, the young man who, against his family's wishes, is staking everything on his musical prospects. "I want you to tell me whether I have any chance of becoming in time a pianist in the first rank." Then Maugham—quickly, cleanly—delivers the *coup de grâce*: "Not in a thousand years," she answers. At the story's end the young man goes off and shoots himself.

Yet another side to the youthfulness of musical creation is the number of major composers who left the game too soon—blazing comets that tailed off much too early. Mozart (1756–1791) was thirty-five at his death; Schubert (1797–1828) only thirty-one; Chopin (1810–1849) was probably lucky, given his bad health, to have made it to thirty-nine; Schumann (1810–1856) was forty-six; Tchaikovsky (1840–1893) was immensely productive up until his death at fifty-three; and even at fifty-seven, Beethoven (1770–1827), given his furious energy, seems to have died before his time. Did Mozart, did Schubert, did other of these men compose at the astounding clip that they did with some premonition that they would be short-lived? Without the least evidence to back it up, one is inclined to think that perhaps they did. Or does it make more sense to consider Hugo Wolf's darkly deterministic opinion that artists die when their work is complete. More mystery; music, it sometimes seems, is all mystery.

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What has become less mysterious to me is why my own love for music remains so hopelessly bumbling. Maurice Baring, the English essayist, has in part helped explain my own case to me. Baring was a man who in his day claimed to "have heard some very nice noises," among them Piatti and Casals playing the violoncello, Donald Tovey playing Beethoven and Bach, Paderewski playing Chopin, Chaliapin singing through an entire opera at the piano in his own home, Caruso scores of times. Baring defined and ranked persons who are really musical as "those happy few who have an absolute ear and who can detect and distinguish any key that is being played"; then those who can read a full score with profit and pleasure; then those who can read music at sight; and finally "those who cannot read at sight, but who can play by ear." Baring himself could do none of these things; and neither, at this point it will scarcely shock anyone to learn, can I. My guess is that if I could I would remember music much better than I now do; that I would be able to hum great stretches of it, like the music critic who is the narrator of Kingsley Amis's *Girl, 20* and who, to control his temper, hums "the openings of all the movements of Beethoven's string quartets"; that I might just curl up of a wintry evening with the score of the *Jupiter* Symphony on my lap. As it is, having neither natural gifts nor training, without knowing either the grammar or the syntax of music, I continue to muddle along, my taste and hunger for music unabated by my ignorance of it.

Maurice Baring was not fond of concerts and claimed that he had never been to one that he didn't think too long. Here we part company—"See ya around, Moe"—for I do look forward to concerts, even though I often have a tough time keeping my mind on the music and sometimes even in the room. Much in the room, though, usually does interest me. The crowds at concerts, especially chamber music concerts, tend not to be composed of glittering people; and the more serious the music, the less glittering they are. Music, it does not take much imagination to grasp, is for many of these people consolation. Consolation for what? Natural disadvantages in life, personal tragedies, a thousand different sadnesses. As consolation, it seems to work remarkably well. "When people listen to music," wrote the young Ben Hecht, "it always reminds me we are descended from fish." I disagree. Rapt in music, many faces take on an impressive serenity, even beauty. Others, evidently at the concert under domestic duress, hit the deck hard and are snoozing away, *adagio sostenuto*, early in the proceedings.

My own mind often floats off during a concert—to thoughts about my work, or petty troubles, or grandiose plans for the future. I urge myself to return mentally to the music, but I'm not always successful, or at least not for the nearly two hours that most contemporary concerts take. Oddly, the place I seem to have the greatest power of concentration for music is in my car. There I am in an enclosed place, with no distractions arising other than those supplied by the road, and I am able to command full attention to the music playing on tape or on the excellent car radio. But what I miss is watching the musicians, which not only offers its own fascinations but is helpful to someone of my own lack of sophistication, who cannot always dependably identify, on radio, tapes, records, or CDs, the exact instruments he is hearing.

I condemn the star system in serious music, yet the truth is that I am also caught up in it and go to my share of performances by today's greatly publicized concert performers. From my own less than comprehensive reading about these matters, I gather that it was Paganini and Liszt who, in the nineteenth century, gave the concert soloist his current high status. It was Liszt in particular who lifted the concert performer from the class of paid servant, not alone with his virtuosic playing but with his hauteur. During a concert in St. Petersburg, playing before Tsar Nicholas, Liszt stopped cold and walked away from the piano when the Tsar was speaking loudly with a female companion. "Why have you stopped playing?" the Tsar asked. "When the Tsar speaks," answered Liszt, "one ought to be silent." Still, Liszt could do nothing to abate the interior pressures of musical performance at the highest level, where every time one plays one is putting one's reputation on the line, where one is regularly being judged and compared, and where one is laying bare before large audiences one's emotional life through the performance of music.

In Marian McKenna's biography of Dame Myra Hess I was interested to learn that, even after performing in hundreds of concerts, Myra Hess's nervousness, which was always

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considerable, did not with time lessen. In some ways it became even greater, so that later in her career she returned to playing with musical notation before her. It was Clara Schumann who first put solo performers under the obligation of playing lengthy works from memory, when, in 1837, she played the *Appassionata* in Berlin without music. Over this past year, I have seen Daniel Barenboim play both the *Goldberg Variations* and the *Diabelli Variations* without the music before him; piece, apparently for Barenboim, of cake. But Myra Hess had come to believe that playing from memory was "an artificial fetish," and she later said that "it suddenly seemed quite senseless to give oneself the extra 'tight rope' strain of always playing from memory." Whether she was right or wrong about this, having the music before her when she played was thought to have cost Myra Hess with certain critics. They play rough out there in the musical world.

I admire the discipline and the courage that has gone into the careers of the superior musical performers, but above all I feel that they are in on an important secret from which I feel excluded. Perhaps it is possession of this secret that gives these performers their magical quality. After her concerts, Myra Hess frequently used to ask, "Did I come nearer the truth?" What truth, exactly, did she have in mind? The truth inherent in the music, doubtless. But why do I sense that this truth is unavailable to me? Is it because I am a writer? "Writers, in general, have not such a spontaneous relation to music as painters and scientists," said Artur Schnabel. "Writers are more self-conscious, inclined to translate every experience into words. This cannot be done with music; therefore their reactions are not pure enough." I fear there may be much to what Schnabel says. How is musical enjoyment related to musical understanding? That is a question I ask with ever greater insistence and puzzlement. And, in my own case, I wonder how I am able to enjoy music so much while understanding it so little. Dimly, off in the background, I can hear a voice whispering, "Only a writer could ask such questions. Only a writer could be so stupid."

Artur Schnabel goes on to say that music ought to be listened to with a purely musical attentiveness, "in a state of physical passivity, and intellectual passivity too, so far as association of ideas is concerned, but with a spiritual and emotional activity which awaits its release." Dame Myra Hess offers a gentler but perhaps not less true perspective, saying: "For anybody who wants to think, music gives them all they need; for anybody who wants to forget, it will give them that, too. And both kinds of people will be refreshed for having heard some music." Even Schopenhauer, a man who did a bit of writing in his time, notes that music "speaks so much to the heart, while it has nothing to say *directly* to the head and it is a misuse of it to demand that it should do so."

The advice implicit in all those remarks is clear enough: sit down, shut up, and listen to the music, lots of it. Good advice. Time, perhaps, I took it, *presto affectuoso*, and no kidding around, before the doors close and I miss the concert altogether.

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The New Segregation on Campus

DINESH D'SOUZA

LESS THAN FORTY YEARS AGO, American society began a laborious and painful project to eliminate all vestiges of racial segregation from public life. On May 17, 1954, flanked by eight colleagues at a press conference, Supreme Court Justice Earl Warren read from the momentous *Brown v. Board of Education* decision: "Does segregation . . . on the basis of race, even though the physical facilities and other tangible factors be equal, deprive the children of the minority group of equal education? We believe that it does." Programs to enforce public school desegregation were soon followed by ambitious efforts to integrate public transportation, hotels and restaurants, residential areas, in some cases even private clubs. By the mid-1960s, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s victory was virtually complete: it was socially disreputable and politically suicidal for public figures to advocate racial segregation, and despite pockets of bellicose resistance, the nation seemed united in its commitment to full integration of racial minorities into all facets of life.

Yet America enters the last decade of the twentieth century with a strong and persistent residue of de facto segregation. Indeed even without the support of law, social pressures appear actively to promote racial and ethnic isolation in many areas, threatening to reverse the trend of the past several decades, to thwart the national aspiration for integration, and to revive such concepts as "separate but equal," which had justified legal segregation since the late nineteenth century. Paradoxically, nowhere is the new segregation more evident than in that seemingly most progressive of institutions, the American university.

Universities were once thought a microcosm of society. But they are more than a reflection or mirror; they are a leading indicator. The campus environment is one where students live, eat, and study together, with the result that racial and cultural differences come together in the closest possible way. Of all American institutions, perhaps only the

✪ DINESH D'SOUZA is a research fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. His book *Illiberal Education: The Politics of Race and Sex on Campus* will be published this March by the Free Press/Macmillan.

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military brings people of such different backgrounds into more intimate contact. Moreover, university leaders are embarked on a conscious project to shape students into future leaders of an increasingly multicultural community. Consequently, the American campus becomes a very useful test case for institutional and social policies that draw racial groups together—or pry them apart; that promote integration—or separatism; that foster ethnic collegiality and harmony—or isolation and bitterness.

II

Separate and Unequal

Anyone who is part of the American university culture, as well as informed outside observers, cannot fail to notice the proliferation of separatist minority organizations on virtually every college campus. Universities that only a few years ago recognized an Afro-American Society and possibly an International Students Organization now sponsor a bewildering array of ethnic organizations. Just how far group specialization extends is evident from a partial catalogue of minority organizations at Cornell University: Black Women's Support Network; Ethos Minority Yearbook; Black Biomedical and Technical Association; Gays, Bisexuals, and Lesbians of Color; La Asociacion Latina; La Organizacion de Latinas Universitarias; Le Club Haitien; Mexican-American Student Association; Minority Business Student Organization; Minority Industrial and Labor Relations Student Organization; Minority Undergraduate Law Society; National Society of Black Engineers; Society of Minority Hoteliers; Students of African Descent United; Uhuru Kuumba; Washanga Simba; not to mention nine black and Hispanic fraternities and sororities.

The University of California at Berkeley offers a no less impressive roster, including African Descendants Valuing and Nurturing Community Empowerment; African Students Association; Association for Raza Talent; Association of Black Students in Sociology; Association of Graduate Muslim Students; Black Freshmen Alliance; Black Women Support Group; Chicano Architecture Student Association; Chicanos in Health Education; La Raza Law Students Association; Law Students of African Descent; Minority Pre-Law Coalition; Multicultural Lesbian Bisexual Gay Alliance; Multicultural Multiracial Women's Coalition; Scientists of Color; Third World Voice; and United People of Color. As with Cornell, Berkeley reflects the different causes and interests of various groups that consider themselves oppressed minorities.

On many campuses, separatism is not confined to membership in

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ethnically oriented extracurricular groups but extends to most aspects of campus life. Students at several universities have remarked on the widespread phenomenon of "black tables" at the university dining hall, where groups of African-American students insist on eating meals by themselves and regard white students who join them with undisguised antagonism. Surveying the Berkeley campus, the *New York Times* reported what any observant visitor notices: "Blacks and whites root for the same team but sit in different sections . . . floors in the undergraduate library are in practice segregated by race . . . rarely does a single white or two comfortably join a dining room table occupied mostly by blacks."

Two recent graduates of Columbia have written that the university "is deeply divided along racial lines. Blacks gather in one area of the classroom, whites in another. Blacks and whites keep to different social circles. They don't participate in the same campus organizations, join the same fraternities, or hang out in the same bars. With infrequent exceptions, they are not friends. On this liberal, Ivy League campus where we expected to find racial harmony and friendship, there is rampant and growing mutual racism." These patterns are all too familiar at American universities across the country.

It is no exaggeration to say that many colleges are divided into sharply distinct ethnic subcultures—a black culture, a Hispanic culture, an Asian culture, and a (residual) white culture. Minority students often express contempt for what they describe as "white cultural norms," and they insist on adhering to manners and morals that they promote as authentically black, Hispanic, or Third World. Black students, for example, frequently identify with the protest culture of rap music and Malcolm X rhetoric. As one Howard University activist said, "Malcolm has replaced Martin as our leader." Responding to the new trend, a black student at Central Michigan University complained, in an article published in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, "If I listen to a rock concert, people will say I am listening to white music. They will say I'm trying to act white. Certain activities are labeled 'white' and 'black.' If you don't just participate in black activities, you are shunned."

Faced with increasing separatism, university leaders find themselves in a quandary. James Duderstadt, president of the University of Michigan, said, "We really did not expect this—it has come as a surprise." Frank Rhodes, president of Cornell, has written, "We face an unresolved conflict between the natural impulse toward proud separate racial and ethnic identity on the one hand, and the genuine desire, on the other, for meaningful integration that transcends differences of background."

University presidents and deans know that demands for minority segregation are problematic, given the public commitment of universities to integration and the close involvement of students from different

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backgrounds. Nevertheless, nervous about saying no to groups of passionate and often agitated minority students, university administrators typically accede to these demands and both recognize and subsidize racial separatism.

Not only does such support involve facilities as well as financial support for ethnic organizations, but in many cases universities now also provide separate residential quarters. At Oberlin College, for example, the administration has set up special-interest dormitories, such as the African Heritage House, the Third World House, and the Asia House. Stanford has "ethnic theme houses," such as the predominantly black Ujaama, and the university's president, Donald Kennedy, says that one of his educational objectives is "to support and strengthen ethnic theme houses." Ohio State University also permits minority facilities, and its director of residence, Rebecca Parker, says that such separatism "needs to be seen as a celebration of our differences."

At the University of Pennsylvania, the administration has, through the Afro-American Society, financed a yearbook titled *Positively Black*, even though only 6 percent of Penn students are black and no other group gets to publish its own yearbook. Some schools, such as Dartmouth and the University of Illinois, have allowed separate minority graduation ceremonies on the grounds that blacks, Hispanics, and foreign students may not be able to "identify" with the official program. Central Michigan University is considering requests from black students who want the right to insist upon black roommates. And California State University at Sacramento is working out the details of a new plan to establish a separate "college within a college" for black students who do not want to be part of what they consider the mainstream white culture of the campus.

III

Integration vs. Pluralism

To justify these new developments, university leaders have developed a model of pluralism that they say replaces the antiquated concept of integration. While integration relied upon the concept of racial groups dissolving their distinctive cultural habits into a common American culture, pluralism affirms and accentuates ethnic differences. Malcolm Willis, vice-provost at Duke University, maintains that the paradigm of the "melting pot" has been replaced by that of the "salad bowl." In this view, far from asking racial and ethnic groups to jettison their particularities, universities help to preserve the varied cultural ingredients that produce a rich and savory "multiculturalism" or "diversity."

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The only problem with this vision is that the campuses most dedicated to advancing pluralism of this sort are precisely the ones undergoing the greatest volume of racial tension and racial incidents. The national media has noted the rapid resurgence of bigotry on American campuses. The problem has been ascribed, by Reginald Wilson of the American Council on Education and the *Washington Post* editorial page, among others, to Reagan-era insensitivity and a failure to tutor young people in the lessons of the civil rights movement, thus allowing an upsurge of adolescent prejudice to express itself unembarrassed and unchecked.

But these explanations ignore the fact that the vast majority of racial incidents have been recorded at northern campuses with a progressive reputation. The South, ancestral home of socially sanctioned bigotry and segregation, seems to have accommodated minority students on its campuses relatively well. Administrators concede that ethnic hostility seems most acute at such places as Berkeley, Michigan, Oberlin, and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, whose chancellor, Joseph Duffey, reacted to a racial brawl with the perplexed comment, "People here pride themselves on being liberals. They think things like this only happen in Forsyth, Georgia." An examination of a hundred racial incidents tabulated by the National Institute Against Prejudice and Violence indicates that the state with the most problems is Massachusetts, which is not exactly Reagan country.

Troy Duster, a sociologist at Berkeley, in a recent study found a correlation between group separatism and racial hostility among students. Duster reported that students of different backgrounds come to college thinking of themselves as "individuals" or "Americans" but soon begin to think of themselves as "African American, Asian American or whatever." Duster discovered that "ethnic enclaves" encouraged by universities produce balkanization among racial groups, with the result that "each group accuses other groups of being closed and not receptive" and "each complains about being stereotyped." In short, pluralism seems to produce neither a salad nor a pleasing ethnic smorgasbord but rather various racial platoons, each armed with distinctive cultural identities, viewing other groups across horizons of suspicion and truculence.

Perhaps the most disturbing development in this separatist conflict is the recent establishment of white student unions on such campuses as Temple University and Florida State. Having financed a battery of minority groups, including black student unions, university officials had no option but to recognize their white counterparts as official student organizations. Along the same lines, as a cultural alternative to Black History Month in 1989, white students at the University of Michigan put

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up posters announcing "White Pride Week," which was said to be a celebration of "yachts, sailboats, navy blazers, cool white presidents, all the kids we know are our own, polo stuff, L. L. Bean, Land's End, and plantations." Fred Sheehen of the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education expects this so-called white backlash to continue. When universities promote minority dormitories and groups, Sheehen predicts, soon fraternities may ask for segregated facilities on the grounds that "white males need a support group too." One college dean glumly speculated that, even as they mobilize against investments in South Africa, American universities are consolidating their own form of apartheid.

IV

More Equal than Others

What is going on? How has the American university changed from an advocate of integration and racial harmony into an apparent sponsor of division and conflict? Why has the passion for eliminating racial classification, primary in the civil rights movement, given way to an equally strong drive to heighten and affirm racial distinction? The answer begins with admissions policies at American universities, which determine the composition of each freshman class.

The overwhelming majority of colleges are under constant pressure from state legislatures, civil rights groups, and faculty and student activists to increase minority representation. Administrators sometimes welcome this challenge, because many espouse a political philosophy in which racial groups on campus roughly approximate their proportion in the general population. "Proportional representation" is the new admissions buzzword—and it is official policy at such universities as Berkeley, where the university admits that only 50 percent of students each year are admitted according to the traditional criterion of academic merit. Many university leaders argue that since a college education provides many financial and social benefits in later life, equitable racial allocation of freshmen seats is the only just distribution of rewards in a democratic society.

The reason admissions policy must move beyond merit criteria, it is argued, is that, for various reasons, racial groups perform very differently on such academic indices as standardized test scores and grade point averages. Thus, the goal of proportional representation requires that colleges play down or ignore grades and test results and accept students from certain minority groups who are less well prepared than other students, who are consequently refused admission. In practice, this

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means that black, Hispanic, and American Indian students, who are considered members of under-represented groups, are given preference over better-qualified white and Asian students, who are considered over-represented. Regardless of its rhetorical aspirations, this is the contemporary reality of "affirmative action."

Unfortunately, the number of students from affirmative action minority groups who meet the demanding admissions standards of selective colleges is extremely small. In 1988, although nearly 100,000 black students took the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), only 116 scored above 699 (out of 800) on the verbal section; only 342 scored that high on the math section. Fewer than 3,000 blacks scored above 599 on either part of the test. The average white-black differential in aggregate score was enormous: 198 points. The Asian-black differential was equally large: 192 points. Universities that seek 8 to 10 percent enrollments of black students are frequently forced to make substantial accommodations in academic criteria in order to meet their affirmative action targets.

Ernest Koenigsburg, a Berkeley business professor who has served on admissions committees, explained the way this works at his university. Imagine a student with a grade point average of 3.5 (out of 4.0) and an SAT score of 1,200 (out of 1,600). If such a student were black, Koenigsburg reports that his or her chances for admission are virtually 100 percent. If such a student were white or Asian, however, Koenigsburg calculates that the probability of admission would be less than 5 percent.

While affirmative action compromises at other universities may be less dramatic, nevertheless the overall effect of aggressive preferential treatment programs is to assemble freshmen classes with racial groups of measurably unequal preparation. Moreover, from the perspective of academic qualifications, such programs misplace minority students throughout higher education—applicants who are academically prepared for Towson State are admitted to the University of Illinois; those qualified for Illinois are admitted to Williams; those who meet Williams' requirements are admitted to Yale. Even academically strong minority students find themselves in a difficult position. Thus, although black freshmen at Massachusetts Institute of Technology are typically in the top 10 percent of students taking standardized tests, they are also on average in the bottom 10 percent of the exceptional students MIT admits each year.

One reason these facts are not well known is that universities do everything they can to camouflage them—partly because their affirmative action policies are most defensible when stated at a high level of generality, partly because of a legitimate desire to protect the self-pride of minority students. Nevertheless, while it is possible to make admis-

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sions decisions in secret, it is impossible to conceal the consequences of affirmative action, because they will be walking around campus for the next several years.

Imagine the plight of minority students accepted on preferential treatment at places like Berkeley, Michigan, or Harvard. Professors at such selective schools assume a certain level of what E. D. Hirsch termed "cultural literacy" from the outset: they expect that students know who wrote *Paradise Lost*, that they have heard of Karl Marx and the *Communist Manifesto*, that they can solve equations, and that they know something about the cell and the amoeba. Freshmen are expected to be able to read *Hamlet*, perform laboratory experiments, and write analytical papers on short notice. As many teachers and university officials admit, many minority students from disadvantaged backgrounds have enormous difficulty simply keeping up during the first semester. In *Blacks in College*, Jacqueline Fleming of Barnard documents that blacks on predominantly white campuses undergo "feelings of competitive rejection" that lead to lethargy, depression, and fear of failure.

Affirmative action students are usually astonished at their academic hardships, because for the year before college they have enjoyed the avid courtship of admissions officers, who have assured them that they belong at the university, that standards have not been lowered to let them in—indeed that they have a distinct perspective that the university could not hope to gain from other students. The high expectations of these minority students are typically eroded by the end of the first semester, when the natural difficulties of adjustment to college life are compounded by academic pressures more severe than those faced by other undergraduates.

It is at this point, when minority freshmen find themselves in this predicament, that they begin to look for comfort and security among their peers in a similar situation. Many sign up for their campus Afro-American Society or Hispanic Student Association or ethnic theme house, where they attempt to share their hopes and frustrations in a receptive atmosphere. Now they begin to seek guidance from older classmates who have journeyed these unfamiliar and somewhat frightening paths.

V

The Grievance Industry

While these separatist institutions provide a social enclave for affirmative action students, offering genuine camaraderie and support, they have no remedy for the students' academic problems. Virtually none

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provides programs in remedial reading, basic mathematics, or other skills related to course work. What they come up with instead is an attractive explanation—minority students suffer not because they are inadequately prepared for the work, but because of the pervasive bigotry that makes it impossible for them to advance. Although such racism may not be obvious at first, minority freshmen are informed that it operates in elusive forms, such as baleful looks, subtle insinuations, uncorrected mental stereotypes, and what educators Jeff Howard and Ray Hammond in a 1985 article in the *New Republic* termed "rumors of inferiority." Moreover, the university itself is said to have gone from "overt racism" to "institutional racism," evident in the disproportionately small number of minorities reflected in the faculty and among the deans.

Once racism is held accountable for minority unrest on campus, it is now up to students to find, expose, and extirpate it. Here the university often steps in with offers of assistance. Eager to prevent minority frustration and anger from directing itself at the president's or dean's office, the administration hotly denies the reality of preferential treatment and affirms minority students in their conviction that the real enemy is latent bigotry that everywhere conspires to thwart campus diversity. As the Harvard political scientist Harvey Mansfield bluntly puts it, "White students must admit their guilt so that minority students do not have to admit their incapacity."

The anti-racist campaign on campus takes various forms. In its mildest form, it involves a drumbeat of intemperate rhetoric. Frequently it includes the university sponsorship of so-called sensitivity seminars, sometimes mandatory, where non-minority students are urged to acknowledge publicly their deep-rooted pathologies of bigotry. Nor are such pressures confined to whites; activists even brand black students who resist their political diversity agenda as "Oreos" or "Incognegroes" —they are presumed to be black on the outside but white on the inside.

Some campuses have set up a "racism hotline" to report instances of ethnic insensitivity; others, such as Harvard, have full-time staff to prosecute such complaints by minorities against other students and faculty. Several schools, among them Stanford, Emory, and the universities of Michigan and Wisconsin, have adopted censorship regulations that in most cases outlaw "stigmatizing" and "stereotypical" remarks directed against minority students, a prohibition that extends in one case to "conspicuous exclusion from conversation" and "derisive laughter." Southern Methodist University recently punished one student for calling Martin Luther King, Jr., a communist and singing "We Shall Overcome" in a "sarcastic manner"; another student was convicted of using a "derogatory tone" in calling his roommate a "Mexican."

While many universities sternly scrutinize the motives, behavior, and

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speech of alleged campus bigots, these suspicions do not usually extend to the minority activists themselves. A group of professors called Concerned Faculty at Michigan supplied the rationale for this double standard:

> Behavior which constitutes racist oppression when engaged in by whites does not have this character when undertaken by people of color. For example, a white person may not proclaim a lounge or campus organization only for whites. Yet there is an important place on this campus for Black Student Lounges, the Black Student Union, etc. Such associations do not oppress whites, because people of color are not in a position to deprive whites of the powers, opportunities and recognition they need to advance their interests.

In the same vein, Gayatri Spivak, Andrew Mellon Professor of English and Cultural Studies at the University of Pittsburgh, argues that while it is essential to teach white students sensitivity to cultural diversity, such qualities as tolerance cannot reasonably be expected of minorities. "Tolerance is a loaded virtue," said Spivak, "because you have to have a base of power to practice it. You cannot ask a certain people to 'tolerate' a culture that has historically ignored them at the same time that their children are being indoctrinated into it."

However comprehensive the effort of universities to ameliorate minority concerns, it seldom succeeds. Eventually minority discontent, which was spawned in large part because of academic difficulties, returns to the classroom. Minority students are now informed that even as they agitate against widespread campus racism, the worst form of bigotry stands right in front of them. In particular, as heard during Stanford University's much-publicized "Hey hey, ho ho, Western culture's got to go" debate, most of the curriculum consists of works by whites, collectively echoing a Eurocentric perspective. No wonder, then, that students from different backgrounds have difficulty absorbing culturally alien texts. This realization leads quickly to demands for a multicultural curriculum, including the establishment or expansion of such distinctive programs as Afro-American Studies, which are said to offer an authentic black perspective. Such perspectives can become somewhat rarified, as in Harvard law professor Derrick Bell's refusal to teach for a year to pressure the university into granting tenure to a black female, whose unique perspective Bell said neither white women nor black men could hope to provide.

The extension of minority separatism to the classroom, specifically in such special programs as Afro-American studies and more broadly through the invocation of distinct minority perspectives, creates in effect a color-coded system of scholarship, in which traditional fields of inquiry are put down to the white way of thinking, which of course needs to be

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balanced by equally important and valid minority viewpoints. Far from resisting the establishment of separatist departments such as Afro-American Studies, college officials usually welcome it, because it provides an easy way to fulfill faculty affirmative action targets, thus keeping less-than-qualified minority teachers away from the mainstream curriculum. Moreover, such departments often become curricular equivalents for the social function served by minority organizations—they provide students with a refuge from the pressures of integrated campus life.

VI

The New Racism on Campus

Issues of race place most white students in a very uncomfortable position. Surveys have shown that today's generation of young people has remarkably tolerant views, including widespread acceptance of interracial dating. Even though many whites may not have lived or studied with blacks, Hispanics, or other minorities in the past, they seem generally committed to equal rights and open to building friendships and associations with people whom they know have been wronged through history.

Since they applied to college, many white and Asian American students know that other groups have enjoyed preferential treatment in admission. Even students who support affirmative action in principle have qualms when they see that it is now harder for them to gain acceptance to universities for which they have prepared. Even if they get in, many have friends in high school who they believe were denied admission to make room for minority students with weaker qualifications. For Asian students, many from disadvantaged backgrounds, such as the Cambodian boat people, it is impossible to justify such discrimination on the grounds of past crimes or present privilege—the cruel irony for this minority group is that quotas once intended as instruments of inclusion seem to have become instruments of exclusion.

Students are reminded of these concerns about equity when they see the obvious differences in preparation among various groups in class. Black and Hispanic difficulties become a confirmation of the suspicion that universities basically operate on a racial multiple-track admissions process. Yet it is obvious that this cannot be stated in public, partly because universities continue to deny that they lower requirements for select groups and partly because minorities would take serious offense at such "insensitivity." Consequently, most students discuss affirmative action only in private. But since students live and study in close quarters, it is impossible to conceal common sentiments for long, and soon

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minority students suspect that people are talking about them behind closed doors and about the issue most sensitive to them—namely, whether they belong at the university or not. This strengthens minority sentiments about the existence of subtle and elusive prejudices against them.

White students tend to have a mixed response to minority separatism. For bigots among them, such self-segregation comes as a tremendous relief, partly because it removes blacks and Hispanics from the mainstream of campus life and partly because it reinforces racist attitudes. Bigoted students confirm their prejudices in two ways: first, by congratulating themselves on the validation of their suspicion that minorities cannot succeed on their own and require special group concessions; and second, by assuring themselves that it is perfectly acceptable for them to prefer to associate only with whites, since minorities clearly exercise a preference for their own. Mark Wright, founder of a white student union at the University of Florida, told his local newspaper, "When whites decide to stand up for issues that are important to them, we are labeled racist. When blacks do so, they are labeled civil rights activists."

While few students wish to join all-white institutions, many observe that university policy toward racial groups employs a double standard that apparently replicates the racial preferences of admissions policy. Many students agree with the *Washington Post* columnist William Raspberry, who has written that "you cannot claim both full equality and special dispensation." Minority separatist institutions are most irritating, not so much because they are separate, but because in many cases they become institutional launching pads for systematic attacks directed against whites. Many separatist groups are quick to make accusations of bigotry, to the point where any disagreement with the agenda of the Afro-American Society is automatically evidence of racism. Here the doctrine of pluralism has become a framework for racial browbeating and intimidation.

When they discover resentment among students over preferential treatment and minority separatism, activists and university administrators typically conclude that they have discovered the latent bigotry for which they have been searching. This resurgence of racism, they claim, illustrates that "more needs to be done" in the form of redoubled minority recruitment, the establishment of ethnic studies requirements, recognition for a black sorority, a new Third World center perhaps, and the inevitable establishment of a task force to make additional proposals. In short, university policies of preferentialism and double standards create racial division and tension on campus, and when this happens administrators call for an intensification and multiplication of such policies.

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It is this balkanized environment that gives rise to racial jokes and racial incidents. These episodes are not spontaneous eruptions of old-style racism; they represent the uncorking of a tightly sealed bottle. When legitimate questions about equality and fairness are repressed by an atmosphere of accusation, intimidation, and censorship, they tend to ferment under the surface and finally erupt in perverse, rebellious, and outrageous expression. A close examination of the contemporary culture of racial humor on campus, as well as documented racial incidents, points to a large number that are directly related to the two-tier system of justice for racial groups, extending from admissions policy to life on campus, to the classroom. Needless to say, as universities redouble their current agenda for multiculturalism, pluralism, and diversity, these problems will continue to worsen and universities will experience more numerous, and more vicious, racial incidents.

VII

Higher Education and Single Standards

Thoughtful advocates of civil rights increasingly recognize the danger to minority aspirations and racial harmony posed by the new segregation on campus. Eleanor Holmes Norton, former head of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission under President Carter and now a professor at Georgetown Law School, argues that "separatism is exactly what we fought against—it is antithetical to what the civil rights movement was all about. It sets groups apart, and it prevents blacks from partaking of the larger culture." Writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, the historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., observed that, in the classroom, "the melting pot has yielded to the Tower of Babel" and, with contemporary trends, "we invite the fragmentation of our culture into a quarrelsome spatter of enclaves, ghettos and tribes." The Yale law professor Stephen Carter, in an article in *Reconstruction*, a new journal of African-American scholarship, warns that under a regime of racial double standards, even qualified minorities find their achievements routinely called into question—they become victims of what Carter calls the "best black syndrome."

Recent data indicate that black enrollment at mainstream universities is relatively stagnant or dropping, while enrollment at historically black colleges is rising fast. The *New York Times* concluded after an investigation that such factors as racial tension and minority frustration are responsible for many students avoiding places like Michigan in favor of places like Howard. The shift back to predominantly black schools, which were termed relics of segregation after the *Brown v. Board of*

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Education decision, represents a dramatic reversal of the trend over the past quarter century. Somehow Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy is being undone by university activists and leaders who claim to be advancing the civil rights cause. But, alas, the only consequence of their policies seems to be the encouragement of bigotry and racial division, which do not bode well for America's future as a multicultural community.

Lawrence A. Cremin

1925–1990

Member, THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR *Editorial Board*

1982–1988

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Uncles

KYOKO MORI

The first in seven years, my uncle Shiro's
letter is full of names, paragraph after
paragraph of brief synopsis like a list
of characters from a novel I could never
finish. He hardly mentions his two sisters

though the brothers get a paragraph
each immediately after the children.
Uncle Ken teaches chemistry at a high school.
Uncle Yasuo lives near their mother, goes
fishing every weekend. This summer,

three brothers met at the house in the country,
drank beer and talked late into night. I hear
the clinking of amber glass, the cicadas
constant as heat currents. Moths flutter over
purple lantern flowers; red lizards dart

among white rocks. The room fills with smoke.
In the cupboard, the black and white stones
for the Japanese chess game they wanted to teach
me twenty years ago. Blind to the patterns in
black and white, I never knew if I was

winning or losing. I cannot now
imagine their talk except that we
women figure little in it. There is

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no time to tell my uncles what I
remember most about them: the purple

hair of the doll Shiro gave me on the day of
his marriage, Ken hitting the volleyball
to me so hard my wrists zinged, the green
feathers of the nightingales Yasuo
kept in bamboo cages. Child of the dead

sister whose name they avoid, I can write
nothing but news, remarks about weather.
It is fall in Wisconsin; red maple leaves
brighten the lawn like stitches in a quilt.
Even inside my house, the potted

avocado has shed one long leaf, its
smooth lines like the fish in the river
at home, where black crows gather another season
over the leafless branches of the persimmon
tree, the silent bells of bitter

fruit. My uncles, I want to ask, as you
harvest the fruit to dry, to sweeten in
the sun, do you remember my mother
who sang you to sleep under the quilts?
Tell me a story I have forgotten.

✪ KYOKO MORI's poems have appeared in the *Northwest Review*, the *Denver Quarterly*, and other journals.

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The Achievement of Paul J. Sachs

NOAM S. COHEN

In 1914, Paul J. Sachs was a mildly successful businessman working for the Wall Street brokerage house of Goldman, Sachs. Through obvious connections to the firm—his mother was a Goldman, his father a Sachs—Sachs became a partner in 1904, four years after he arrived there as a full-time broker. Harvard-educated, a bit of a dandy, Sachs soon grew restless. His work at the firm, which involved negotiating the terms of loans for large businesses, was gravely monotonous, its content abstract and inaccessible; the talents the job required seemed most like those of a common salesman. Speaking in an oral history project recorded in 1958, Sachs described his work at the brokerage firm as being "of limited value—and much more simple than it is today." An additional dampening feature of his work was that Goldman, Sachs was one of a number of Jewish firms, which, while financially successful, were ridiculed by the other Wall Street firms at the time for being somehow less "refined." Remembering one common put-down, Sachs recalled how a broker at the more traditional J. P. Morgan Company chided him for representing F. W. Woolworth, Co., a mere "five and dime store."

The limitations and indignities of the job became more and more apparent to Sachs around the time that he was developing a deepening interest in art. During these years, Sachs would take increasingly long lunch breaks to tour the galleries and expensive bookstores of Manhattan. By 1914 Sachs was determined to follow his inclinations to their logical end. He accepted an offer to become assistant director of the Fogg Museum of Harvard, leaving behind a Wall Street job and moving his family to Cambridge. For the next forty-four years, nearly all of which he also spent as a professor in the fine arts department, Sachs watched over the treasures there, including the more than 2,690 pieces of art he had himself donated to the institution by the time of his death in 1964. Later, as a professor of fine arts for nearly three decades, he presided over the

NOAM S. COHEN, a recent graduate of Harvard University, is a member of the news staff of the *New York Times*.

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preparation—and eventual success—of a new breed of museum curators he helped create. He made a specialty out of his own talent—training students interested in curating—at a time when the job of curator was itself scarcely considered necessary to the smooth operation of America's few public museums.

The breakthrough for Sachs was a year-long graduate course at Harvard in which he taught students the subtle and sometimes not-so-subtle techniques of running a museum. The "museum course," as students came to call it, concentrated on administrative skills as well as on the ability to appreciate art. Sachs knew that in an era when museums had relatively small audiences curators had to be promoters, financial wizards, and students of art. If Sachs wanted a prototype for this new conception of the curator, he need only look to himself. In its polished form, the year-long course included a winter trip, led by Sachs, to the private galleries along the East Coast. At the time, these collections, which were off-limits to the public, boasted some of the finest collections in America. Sachs knew these private collectors. Like the entire course, this trip during the Christmas vacation served both artistic and practical purposes: to understand a particular artist's oeuvre, a young curator needed the many unstudied examples these galleries provided, and to purchase for a museum in the future, a curator needed to know these collectors—to woo donations and, when necessary, to purchase entire estates when they were put on the auction block.

Typically, during the rest of the year Sachs's museum course provided guest lecturers—many of whom would also conveniently turn out to be future employers of the course's graduates. The remainder of the instruction was filled in by Sachs, who would speak extemporaneously on the pieces in his own home or on those displayed in the Fogg. Often he would ask students to do the same. In its own way, each aspect of the course was intended to forge the vaunted "judgment" for which his students were known. "It was designed," Sachs wrote, "to implant scholarly standards in future museum workers; to educate their eyes so that they might be helped to see." Sachs's course is "the best known preparation for art museum posts of responsibility—no little part of its success being due to placing of graduates," a 1939 report written by the head of the American Association of Museum Curators concluded.

The course's prestige was staggering at the time, and its influence is discernible even in our own day. According to statistics Sachs himself kept, his museum course instructed 388 students from 1921 to 1956, and in all but eight of these years the course was taught by Sachs. Of those 388 students, 160 ended up holding "responsible teaching positions in 85 of the 100 best museums of the land." Specifically, of those 160, 42 were museum directors, assistant directors, or administrative officers. When

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former pupils of Sachs came to celebrate his seventieth birthday in 1949, according to one newspaper account, they represented museums in Boston, Hartford, Kansas City, St. Louis, San Francisco, and elsewhere.

Sachs's disciples included not only former students but the three women who founded the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) and its first president, as well as the trustees of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and a host of other museums around the country. At MOMA, Sachs suggested Alfred Barr, Jr., a former student, as the museum's first director; at the Met, he named his personal friend, William Ivins, the curator of prints. Sachs himself was offered the directorship of the Boston museum in the early 1920s, and when he turned down the job he helped pick an alternative director. Generally speaking, during Sachs's thirty years as a Harvard professor and museum administrator, his recommendation of a student for a curatorial job was taken as gospel; after his recommendation, no exhaustive search was needed.

In 1914, however, Sachs's path was scarcely predictable. His impulsive decision to leave Wall Street for the museum world sent a mild tremor through financial circles. "A great many people on 'the Street' thought I was a damn fool and couldn't understand it," he recalled. "But a certain group of much older men, the generation of my father's, seemed to take particular pleasure in it. Many were interested in learning and it pleased them terribly." Some among these older businessmen took pride in the fact that one of their own could operate in this esteemed if esoteric field. Nobody else, needless to say, had taken the extraordinary step of giving up a partnership in a major investment banking firm to follow a similar interest. Letters from colleagues expressing their shock continued to come to Sachs, even after he had moved from New York to Cambridge.

The Fogg, the institution Sachs agreed to help run, required the talents of a former stockbroker. It had been created a generation before as a modest teaching institution for students of fine arts. Yet, when Sachs arrived in Cambridge in 1915, after traveling in America and Europe for six months, the Fogg, then under the new management of Edward Waldo Forbes, was beginning a capital drive to expand its exhibition space. "My business contacts and training might prove helpful in securing the necessary financial support," Sachs recalled suggesting on his arrival. Instead of asking his Wall Street friends for client lists, he asked them for personal donations. When he was not raising funds, Sachs spent a goodly portion of his time negotiating the purchase of art works on behalf of the museum.

That Sachs could quit his Wall Street job to become a curator at a prominent museum indicates the level at which such institutions were

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run at the time. Seemingly anyone with a little pocket change—and free time, since Sachs never received a salary for his curatorial work—was qualified to administer a museum. Edward Forbes, Sachs's colleague at the Fogg, observes in his memoirs that "these days" someone with Sachs's qualifications "wouldn't have a snowball's chance in hell" of being named curator at the Fogg. However, that the museums at that time would seek out someone such as Sachs—with his abundant financial talents and extensive business contacts—to help administer the display of their treasures signaled their determination to remain trivial no longer. Sachs entered the museum world at a time when museums were considered a way of fostering civic peace and left at a time when museums had become not merely a plaything for America's most important philanthropists but also preservers of culture that each year were visited by millions of Americans. Paul Sachs was the motivating force behind what Edward Banfield called "the adaptations [the art museum] has made to changing circumstances in order to maintain itself as an organization and to grow in size and prestige."

II

Paul Sachs was born in New York City on November 24, 1878, to an affluent German Jewish family. Both sides of his family had settled in America around 1848, a time of upheaval in Europe but of commercial expansion in New York City, where they became successful merchants. His uncles (somewhat remarkably since they were first-generation Americans) attended Columbia and Harvard, with their brother and Paul's father, Samuel, who paid his own way on his salary as a shop clerk. The German Jewish community of Manhattan had already established deep roots by the time Paul was born. Temple Emanu-el was the community's synagogue, Beth Israel its hospital, and a school run by Paul's uncle Julius, known as the Sachs School, its college preparatory school.

Under the instruction of his uncle—who had studied at Columbia and a German institute, and later taught at Teachers College of Columbia University—Paul prepared for college. Uncle Julius was a stern taskmaster, who was used to sending his best students to Harvard, Columbia, and other of the best colleges of the day. The school, which was located on the West Side of Manhattan, stressed the classics and had a curriculum similar to many other preparatory schools on the East Coast. Other than the composition of the student body and faculty, there was nothing particularly Jewish about the school.

In fact, according to Sachs, religion was a minor footnote to his experience of growing up. By the time Paul had been born into the

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family, the practice of Judaism had been replaced by a series of communitarian responsibilities that did not deny Jewishness but nevertheless relegated religion strictly to the social sphere.

My father was a very religious man but did not go to temple after he grew up. Nevertheless, he was, I think, in the true sense a religious man. There was, for example, a family identification with charities. One of the charities I was still interested in when I was in New York was the then struggling Beth Israel Hospital. However, we did not participate actively in temple affairs such as the Lehmans did at Temple Emanu-el.

The world in which Paul Sachs grew up was a very tight-knit community of wealthy Jews, among whom were the Schiffs, Lehmans, Sachses, and Warburgs, who all intermarried, attended the same prep schools, and frequented the same resort towns, even if they were not all active members in the synagogue.

Paul's parents greatly valued education. During the summer he would have tutors when the family vacationed in Keene Valley, New Hampshire. When Paul applied for admission to Harvard after earning a certificate from his uncle's school, he was shocked to learn that he had failed the school's admission exam. "Deeply humiliated, I suffered in silence while classmates went off to the land of romantic adventure," Sachs recalled. Illustrating the importance that was attached to a Harvard education in the Sachs family, Paul never considered attending another college, and spent the next year studying in front of a poster that read "I must, I will, I can." The next year Sachs gained admission, but his initial failure continued to haunt him so much that, when he at last became a faculty member, he only half jestingly admitted to a colleague that he was still embarrassed that he had been denied admission to Harvard on his first try.

Cultural instruction became a critical component of the training young people received as part of New York City's wealthy Jewish community. Paul's brother and sister played musical instruments, though he did not, and the family frequently visited the newly built Metropolitan Museum of Art. When the firm of Goldman, Sachs was founded, Paul was seven. He had visited Europe with his father, who traveled there on business, and, of course, Paul and Samuel toured the great European museums. But Paul's artistic interest was cultivated not in Europe but in the pages of the popular magazines of the day. Paul cut out the drawings of such American artists as Winslow Homer and "these drawings my indulgent mother allowed me to paste up on the walls of my little hall bedroom from baseboard to ceiling. . . . The installation was terrible to behold, but served a useful purpose because it gave me my very own museum."

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At nearly the same time that Paul was adorning his bedroom on New York City's West Seventieth Street, Charles Eliot Norton, the esteemed American art critic, was chastising students at Harvard for the poor way they decorated their rooms:

> The average student's room is evidence of barbarism even beyond that which is exhibited in this room. This is not a smiling matter. It is a matter for shame that the standard of taste should be so low as is manifest in the rooms, which are the objects of your chief admiration. Consider how many of the objects in your room are ugly and vulgar! How many of the pictures on your walls would have such a suggestiveness in them as would lead to a real enjoyment of life?

By Norton's standards, Paul Sachs was already at a young age a model appreciator of art—this long before he ever arrived at Harvard. In his adult career Sachs would borrow many of Norton's ideas, and his life uncannily mimicked that of Norton, his predecessor on the Harvard faculty.

III

Charles Eliot Norton, the first professor of fine arts in America, was the premier apostle of art of his time and country. It was Norton who largely created the theoretical ideas about art that together comprised American cultural criticism of the latter half of the nineteenth century. He corresponded with the British writers John Ruskin, Thomas Carlyle, and John Stuart Mill, and agonized in print about the cultural shortcomings of his own country. Although Norton lived abroad for a number of years and was invited to move to England by Ruskin, he never considered leaving America permanently and celebrated its democratic traditions, even though he often blamed these same democratic traditions for the cultural barrenness that surrounded him. Norton was a complex, even contradictory thinker, as even his intellectual admirers note. When Norton began to teach at Harvard, in 1872, he was often grumpy and irritable. He did not try to present a clear explanation of his divergent thoughts but instead engaged in long tirades about, among other things, the campus architecture, not to mention the decor of student rooms. When Sachs arrived at Harvard in 1896, Norton was two years shy of his retirement.

Norton valued beauty and originality in art works, qualities that were to be found, as he demonstrated, only after careful judgment. In a celebrated example of his high standards, Norton often proclaimed that nothing worthwhile had been produced by graphic artists since 1600. To come to such a conclusion required determined study, Norton believed.

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In a bit of self-promotion, Norton argued in 1865 in the recently created journal the *Nation* that great art needed great criticism.

> It is our misfortune to have no body of educated men competent to pass correct judgment, and forming a court of final appeal in matters of learning; not an academy, not an organized body, but a scattered band of men of learning and cultivated critics who would leaven the whole mass of popular ignorance.

Ten years later, Norton went about creating such an educated elite through his Harvard courses, one of the very first fine art classes offered by an American college. It is fair to say that Norton brought an evangelical flair to his teaching. As he put it, "Culture is the Open Sesame by which the gate of promise is unlocked so that men can enter in and take possession of the boundless domain and exhaustless treasures of thought."

From Sachs's writings and life, it is clear that he was an adherent of Norton's ideas. The professor under whom Sachs was planning to study directly after graduating, Charles Herbert Moore, co-taught Norton's art history course at Harvard. (Norton provided artistic theory, Moore discussion of composition and technique.) One might even say that Sachs made practical many of Norton's rather vague notions about art and the creation of an artistic life in America. Although Norton is credited with personally enticing many students to study art, he had nothing like the personal following Sachs had. Norton was legendary for occasionally opening up his ancestral home, Shady Hill, to students. Sachs, too, required that students attend weekly sessions at his home (also Shady Hill—although not purchased directly from Norton). While Norton despaired of the inadequate facilities for serious study of art in America, Sachs went about encouraging the financial elite he had known on "the Street" (many of whom were also Jewish) to help improve the collections of American museums.

Sachs carefully followed Norton's path, both literally—his student rooms overlooked Shady Hill—and figuratively, as his account of their one personal encounter illustrates:

> Only once did I muster up enough courage to accept an invitation to attend at Shady Hill one of the famous evening receptions. Too tongue-tied to speak to the great man I stood rooted most of the evening in front of a portrait attributed to Tinteretto. When finally it came time to go home, I wandered through all the rooms on the ground floor before leaving, fascinated particularly by the Ruskin watercolors of Schaffhusen, which in September, 1919 I purchased from his daughter Sarah Norton, Sally, living in a Chestnut St. house in Beacon Hill.

That Sachs's campus rooms overlooked Shady Hill, which was on the outskirts of the campus, was also a sign that Sachs was not yet fully

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assimilated into campus life. He was not a member of any of the student societies, which typically were off-limits to Jews, and he spent his time collecting books and prints, while his fellow students typically were playing billiards or bridge. Sachs's devotion to Norton was more intellectual than personal. Compare the distant, awed, and impersonal relationship between Sachs and Norton to that of C. C. Stillwell, a donor to the Fogg and Harvard. Stillwell also idolized Norton, but his devotion was of such a different magnitude and temper that one would hardly recognize that Sachs and Stillwell were the same age and that both knew Norton in his later years. Sachs later visited Stillwell's house,

> where I was struck by the objects on walls and tables, chiefly undergraduate insignia, pictures of dogs and horses. In short, the conventional paraphernalia of the undergraduate days of long ago. And there, in this strange setting, I saw a small framed photograph of Professor Norton. I asked him whether this meant that he had been a pupil of Norton's and whether he had taken Norton's Dante course. The eyes of this great big overgrown boy of forty-eight grew moist and he answered, "Yes, those were the happiest days of my life."

Sachs explained that Stillwell agreed to give support to the arts at Harvard, just as Sachs himself did. One kept a musty photograph of Norton, the other kept his house; one made a large donation to Harvard, the other made it his life.

Sachs's close identification with Norton can best be seen in the similarity between their ideas. Some of the central tenets of Sachs can be attributed directly to Norton's influence, among them the emphasis on the originality of an artistic object, the need for an elite to guide the populace, the acknowledgment of European influence on American culture, and the role of scholarship in appreciating artistic efforts. While Norton criticized America's cultural habits and called for an elite, Sachs used similar ideas as the very basis for creating this elite.

First, Sachs believed that art is fundamentally based on an object—an artistic creation that must be scrutinized and then judged by the viewer on its individual merits. He did not agree with George Santayana, with whom he also studied as an undergraduate, for this reason: "The course I took [from Santayana] was aesthetics. To me it was a very interesting course, but I don't think I took it as seriously as the men who devote themselves to aesthetics do today. These seem to me to rarely come to grips with an object itself, whereas I proceed from the object." Sachs's artistic theory in its simplest form opposed abstract theorizing.

Norton made the point in a slightly different way. In a letter to the editor of the *Nation*, Norton told the story of his visit to Italy, where he met some Americans who sold reproductions of famous art pieces to the

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United States. As Mara Mayor writes in her book *Norton, Lowell, and Godkin,* one of these men "explained to Norton that if the statue were not quite perfect in the original, if a nose or arm were missing, they 'perfected' the copy. Norton's argument, on which he asked his readers to meditate, was clear. The idea of culture, in this case of owning reproductions of great works, appealed to Americans, but they had no appreciation of the intrinsic value of art."

One might well ask what is wrong with "perfecting" statues. The sculptor of the *Venus de Milo* did not purposely remove the arms. What is enhanced by having the arms remain off, especially if one is going to make a copy anyway? For anyone interested in the presentation and appreciation of art works, the idea of an "original" is key to that answer. *Why have a museum if cheap copies have equal aesthetic merit? Norton* believed that through the production of copies widespread ownership had replaced the important process of evaluating an artwork. When mass purchasing and collecting substituted for artistic judgment, Norton argued, there was something significantly amiss in American culture.

Sachs, on the other hand, stressed the existence of "originals" not for what it demonstrated about American aesthetics but because originals were central to personal collecting in America. If only for the sake of collecting and a stable art market, "originality" must be preserved. Copies, of course, are anathema to an art market, as Sachs would discover at firsthand. In one of his first large purchases, Sachs bought a forgery. He wrote of the experience and how he was consoled by a famous player in the art market, Bernard Berenson. In a letter in 1926 to Sachs, Berenson wrote: "The technical skill of forgers has got to a point where one is either baffled or bamboozled. I fall back on my aesthetic sense and archaeological knowledge." This statement, too, can be criticized for an apparent contradiction. If a forger can create a work that is "bafflingly" accurate, then what distinguishes it from the original? Even if "aesthetic sense" could separate an original from a forgery—which obviously it cannot do at all times—if only a select few can tell, again, why does it matter?

Norton and Sachs agreed on the need for an educated elite to lead the general public in matters of artistic appreciation. For Sachs, the museum course was the instrument toward this end. Students were expected to return to the populace and instruct it. The course was an outgrowth of Sachs's feverish concern about his country's artistic health and his sense that America had not produced enough curators. "But how were the men to be found in [sufficient] number[s] when the time came when every prosperous self-respecting municipality would wish to boast a museum of its own?" he asked. Sachs hoped to produce what he called connoisseur-scholars, by which he meant something like well-read dilettantes.

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"A museum worker must first and foremost be a broad, well-trained scholar and a linguist," Sachs wrote, "and then, in due course, a specialist."

Sachs's practical method in instructing an elite included "social cultivation." He did not acknowledge this standard publicly, yet he valued it highly, because he knew from his own experience that no amount of bookish knowledge could compensate for the inability to socialize with a potential donor. In this matter, as in many others, Sachs muddled through, obeying the customs while trying as best he could to reconcile them with his own nature. For example, Sachs paid out of his own pocket for the education of Salvatore Russo, "not a Harvard trained product," who attended City College in New York before taking Sachs's graduate museum course. In a letter to Berenson, Sachs gave Russo a letter of introduction and asked for Berenson's opinion of his future as an art appreciator. "I need hardly point out to you that his 'background' is *unusually* [his emphasis] lacking. On the other hand, he has impressed us all, (crude as he is), with his earnestness, and I was wondering whether he is the kind of person, who, in spite of obvious limitations, ought to be encouraged to continue."

Sachs's plans for this trained elite were well-intentioned, even if they were never fully realized. He had hoped that the efforts of the students he instructed would be directed to using art as an educational tool. He said that part of his mission as the instructor of the museum course was to teach his students to "understand that in twentieth-century America a museum should not only be a treasure house, but also an educational system."

This business of "scholarly curating," in its practical application, meant, in Paul Sachs's view, that students would produce definitive and clear catalogues for exhibits. It also implied an elevation of the importance of the curator as artistic interpreter. Sachs believed, therefore, that curators should be better compensated. In addition to advising his students on how to find positions in the best museums, Sachs would often help them negotiate better salaries and fringe benefits. In 1919, when he himself was being considered for the directorship of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts—a position he ultimately rejected so that he could continue teaching—he laid down conditions that included a higher salary, four months of vacation, and other benefits. From the beginning Sachs advocated that curating become a profession. In an article he wrote shortly after arriving at the Fogg for the *Harvard Graduates' Magazine*, Sachs observed: "So elsewhere, in every prosperous municipality in the land, in the next ten years the call is likely to come for thoroughly equipped curators and directors. Harvard must maintain its leadership in this *new profession* [emphasis added], the dignity of which is as yet imperfectly understood."

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It is remarkable the way in which, with only a modest amount of tinkering, Norton's ideas were brought up to date by Sachs to fit a modern, industrial America. A concomitant change in the nature of the public museum made it fairly easy for Sachs to use Norton's ideas about "the object" to encourage the spread of museums and the proliferation of art collecting in America. The enormous trade surpluses with Europe that America amassed at the beginning of the twentieth century, as Sachs noted, allowed American industrial leaders to bring great art works to "our shores." And at the end of his career he made this observation about the changing purpose of the museum:

> The extraordinary development of art museums in the past 50 years is to be looked upon, so it seems to me, as a significant forward step in the social life of America. *It may be explained in various ways, but it is attributable in no small* part to endowments and purchasing funds created by industrial leaders and the vast treasure brought to our shores by them in their capacities as private collectors. . . . Fortunately these funds have also made possible the transformation of our museums into educational centers.

Both of these developments made Norton's constant agonizing about American cultural backwardness seem less pertinent. Perhaps it mattered when a cultivated intellectual such as Norton had to visit Europe to see the best paintings or acquire the best books, but when American museums and libraries could rival those in Europe, as they now began to do, perceived cultural weaknesses spoke more about our artists than our art critics. Moreover, this large movement of the world's paintings from Europe to America further emphasized one of Norton's central tenets: that there needed to be an elite to instruct the populace on what was good art and what was not. The position of the artistic consultant who administered, for a commission, the purchasing budgets of wealthy collectors was greatly expanded at this time. In fact, it is worth noting that the members of the cultured elite that Norton described were intended to be men of letters, critics; the cultured elite that Sachs hoped to produce—and did, in fact, produce—were first of all administrators who could determine the value of art work and figure out how to raise the money to pay for it. Each man cultivated followers with talents most like his own. Even though Sachs relied fairly substantially on Norton's ideas about art to guide his career, he adapted those ideas to the needs of a market economy that favored a distinctly American consumption of art. Perhaps the greatest improvisation Sachs performed on Norton's ideas was his spirited defense of modern art—which at the time sent tremors down the spines of the wealthy and well-established and seemed another manifestation of foreign-bred anarchy. But, for a number of reasons, Sachs's support of modern art, while at first a surprise, represents a consistent extension of his thinking.

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IV

Students who studied under Sachs differ on the question of how their teacher viewed modern art. A profile of Paul Sachs in *Museum News* in 1976, for example, contains the explicitly contradictory opinions of two former pupils, William Lieberman, formerly curator of drawings at the Museum of Modern Art and now the chairman of the Department of Twentieth-Century Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and John Walker, a favorite student of Sachs and a consistent devotee of modern art who later became director of the National Gallery in Washington. Lieberman is quoted as saying, "He wasn't fond of twentieth-century art or its developments, though he was in no way blind to it." But Walker remembered Sachs as someone "who really liked contemporary painting a great deal."

Sachs purchased his first modern painting in 1919 in Paris, after the World War I armistice, where he was serving as an administrator in the International Red Cross. (Being only five feet two inches tall, Sachs was exempted from armed service.) Sachs recognized, nonetheless, that he was hardly a convert to the cause of modern art—that, among other things, the Picasso drawing he bought was urged upon him by writer friends, was completed at the turn of the century, and was considered "conservative." Even so, Lieberman was later able to mount an exhibit at MOMA from Sachs's personal collection of modern drawings.

One explanation for Sachs's indecision and, at times, indifference toward modern art is that his main aesthetic influences—the intellectual and the social ones—provided differing advice on this subject. His primary intellectual guide, Charles Eliot Norton, who wrote mainly until the 1870s and generally disliked art completed more recently than 1600, was understandably silent on the topic. Yet Bernard Berenson, who left America to live permanently in Italy, became increasingly antagonistic to modern art. The correspondence between Sachs and Berenson contains little outright discussion of modern art. Yet only when Berenson was dead did Sachs write his guide to modern drawings, with its strong denunciation of Berenson: "As lay observers can we then afford to look upon so vital a movement [that is, modern art] as no more than a private fantasy and dismiss it as does Berenson?" In the sole mention of modern art that can be found in their letters, Sachs seems, however, to have taken a detached, almost disparaging view of modern art that no doubt would have pleased Berenson.

On the other hand, many of Sachs's New York friends were the first in America to patronize modern art. Sachs's continuing education about the arts taught him to be suspicious of the worth of modern art; but his friends in the bustling world, as well as a desire to be reasonably au courant, taught him the opposite.

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Consequently, depending on which artistic institution he was affiliated with, Sachs could tolerate radically different official policies toward modern art, ranging from intense cultivation to outright neglect of modern art. The Boston Museum of Fine Arts—where Sachs was on the board of trustees and which offered him the position of director—had one modern art exhibition in 1932, which was abruptly shut down, and the museum did not have another exhibition of modern painters until 1947. It appears from the records that this cool reception met with little disagreement from Sachs during his tenure there.

At Harvard, however, Sachs insisted on more room for the display of modern art. When the Fogg Museum began a fund-raising plan in 1915 designed to expand the museum's exhibition space, Sachs recalled that he "stood alone in believing that controversial modern works of art ought also to be shown, if not actually purchased. It seemed to me important to have the Fogg, as a living museum, offer the students contact with the artistic production of the time—the world of actuality." (In a 1915 discussion of the Fogg and its plans for expansion, printed in the *Harvard Graduates' Magazine*, Sachs made no direct mention of controversial modern art works. He chose instead to emphasize the more tried and true themes of the need for good scholarship and "original" works that can be used in teaching connoisseurship.) In 1928, shortly before the founding of the Museum of Modern Art, the Fogg did sponsor an exhibit of nineteenth-century French art that, in the nature of the case, touched upon the roots of abstract art. Sachs explained his support for the show by saying, "I was finally so fed up about the constant resistance here to an interest in the modern field, even such classics as Cézanne—the whole thing is so stupid—that I finally said, 'Well, after all, there's one thing I can do: I can hold a great French show of modern art at the Fogg. That's my business. . . .' and it was a great success." Even here Sachs's enthusiasm for modern art is moderated—he objects to the "resistance to an interest in the modern field," not the resistance to the art itself. This was because he valued an open mind on the question of modern art more than he did a closely argued, if impassioned, hostility to abstract painting and sculpture.

Of course, when Sachs became a founding trustee of the Museum of Modern Art in 1929, he had come to favor the purchase and exhibition of modern art. In fact, Sachs's attitude toward modern art changed considerably because of his connection to the Museum of Modern Art and his talented pupil, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., who, owing to Sachs's recommendation, became the museum's first director. Barr convinced Sachs of the value of modern art in their conversations and by producing high-quality, scholarly catalogues that demonstrated that the new movements in painting and sculpture merited the attention of trained art critics.

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Sachs's own approach to art criticism emphasized the links between works of the past and those of the present. Much of art criticism of his time was devoted to demonstrating the various artistic influences that could be traced back to celebrated, older paintings. The best example of this can be seen in Sachs's own *Modern Prints and Drawings* (1954), which has this description under a Paul Klee drawing: "In Klee's case, once again, we see how tradition plays a role even though quite rightly we think of Klee as one of the most original artists of modern times. Ruth Magurn of the Fogg Museum was the first to point out that a Klee print is but a variation, a free copy, of the famous *Allegory* by Pisanello (c. 1395–1455) in Vienna." Sachs's academic background encouraged him to be open to modern art for at least three reasons: first, the idea, in which he believed, that art progressed; second, the reality of a competitive academic community and art market that rewarded—and kept track of—those art historians who were the first to demonstrate insight about a particular artist or artwork; and third, the idea that art history is the story of a few "original artists."

Sachs by nature and inclination would not be as frightened by modern paintings as those who were not trained to take a long view of art history. His discussion of modern prints and drawings characteristically began with early nineteenth-century painters, David and Goya—artists who date from a full half century earlier than the collections of most modern art museums. He stated his credo for progress in art in the early pages of his book, offering many comfortable clichés about the contemporary artist:

> No matter how daring or revolutionary a new style may appear to be, the tradition of European painting has affected its evolution, even when the artist borrows motives from the art of primitive peoples; deals in pure abstraction; or plumbs the subconscious. In spite of innovations, tradition played its role because the artists who became truly great spent every spare minute in museums. They are also influenced by collectors, connoisseurs, and dealers. . . . Modern artists, like the public, have been groping in an effort to understand social, political, and economic upheavals in this industrial, scientific age.

Each brief, three-paragraph description of a modern artist in Sachs's guide to modern drawings served to provide more evidence of progress in art. Sachs observed that Eduard Degas had a "profound respect for the old masters." About Paul Cézanne, Sachs noted, "Call him what you like, it is important to remember that this innovator considered revolutionary in his twenties, did not rebel against the fundamental tradition of European painting." Each painter received a similar pedigree of influences, even when the relationship was between the modern and the more modern, such as the discussion of Picasso's reliance on Cézanne's earlier work.

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Sachs adhered to a system that in many respects sought to equate the art critic, art dealer, or art historian with a soothsayer. Some of Sachs's greatest praise in his book falls not on the graphic artist, but on the dealer who was among the first to "discover" a noted artist, such as when he breathlessly wrote about his friend the European dealer Ambroise Vollard: "The Picasso portrait [of him] belongs here because this enigmatic dealer of remarkable vision backed Picasso as early as 1901!" Of course, for a dealer, such insight was a prerequisite to making a living managing a gallery. Such a risky task was inherent in the process of appreciating art. Sachs wrote in his description of Walter and Louise Arensberg, two pioneer collectors of modern art from whom he bought his Shady Hill house: "In 1915 I was certainly not yet one of that small group of open-minded people who appreciated the significance of an undertaking to which they devoted their lives." But Sachs did not always consider himself behind the times, as, for example, when he wrote to John Walker: "I have a certain natural curiosity to know whether your early contact with me and my enthusiasm for these two masters has in any way been an influence in pushing further these studies? Have I asked you before whether you share my view that perhaps all in all Degas is the greatest genius of the nineteenth century?"

Yet another indication of Sachs's approach to art criticism comes in his notion that painters and sculptors were "geniuses." In the case of modern art, this bias was enhanced because the artists who painted abstractly did not subsume their personalities to their art's message. Realistic painters, in one important sense, are merely the conduits of the best that their society has to offer—the best materials, the best training, the best legends, and collective myths. Not so with the modern artist. For, as the method of painting becomes increasingly more abstract, the painter becomes more and more responsible for the "creativity" of art.

But how does the idea of the artist as "genius" mesh with Sachs's perspective and its emphasis on the connections between the painters of the past and the present? His ideas about artistic continuity would seem to trivialize the role of the individual painter when compared to the grand Western tradition, but in fact the exact opposite is true. The story of modern art, according to Sachs, is a tale of a succession of great painters and draughtsmen—"geniuses" all—who were able to build freshly upon past artworks. Hence Sachs's all too frequent habit of ranking painters according to their creative powers, such as his description in 1954 of Picasso: "He is, I am convinced, the most influential, the most original, the most inventive, the greatest of living artists in either his graphic style or his daring experimentation. . . . I allot to Picasso more illustrations than any other painter. . . ." Often a few great painters represent the entire modern art movement, as when Sachs writes about

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America: "Have we as yet produced any work as important in quality or in originality as that by such prolific and versatile men of genius as Cézanne, Seurat, Picasso, and Matisse?"

In essence, what occurs when art history is narrated as a series of works created by "geniuses" is that all art becomes non-historical and non-ideational and is instead a story of creative people, all of whom had to learn how to draw at a school, who used the same tools and materials, and who had the same artistic heritage—and differ only by their distinct "genius." As Sachs explained in the introduction to *Modern Prints and Drawings*:

> It has been my aim not to overstress "isms"—Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Cubism, Surrealism, Futurism—so as not to deflect you from looking at the pictures. . . . [This practice] tends to distract us from full appreciation of the inherent merit, the individuality of a genius, and ignores the conflicting countercurrents that usually underlie distinguished creation, the kind of creation that outlives the fashion of the moment and makes a work of art lasting and timeless.

Sachs's non-ideological approach and ideas about the artist as a timeless genius are seen clearly in the didactic instructions he gave to the reader for appreciating drawings and prints. "As you look at the individual pictures, whether they are conservative or radical, it may be useful to keep in mind certain accepted criteria of artistic quality. Is there structural clarity of form? Is there flexibility and sensitiveness of touch? Is there feeling for the medium? Is there suggestive power? Is there expressiveness? . . . Is there originality of concept?" For Sachs, permanent, if ambiguous, standards for great art could be cited, and ideological baggage was simply not relevant to the evaluative process.

Sachs's academic background disposed him to be tolerant of novel thinkers and, hence, novel artists. His arguments in support of modern art often rely on freedom and openness: "We all read current literature and listen to new music. Let us then look at the new as well as the old aspects of art. Let us avoid the tiresome complaint that the times are out of joint. We may be surprised to find that art in modern times is realistic as well as abstract, traditional as well as experimental, conservative as well as radical." And, later, Sachs wrote: "I wish to emphasize at least once in these pages the importance of making such an exhibition so widely available. Our museums should be platforms for the preservation of still controversial figures like Matisse, as well as artists of classic reputation. The entire country needs museums that are open-minded and unafraid of the advanced."

The basic corollary to the freedom that Sachs invoked in the name of modern art was that bad ideas deserved to fail. When describing the

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donations to the Fogg from a friend, Maurice Wertheim, Sachs observed, "Wertheim was not afraid of modern art, but was determined, as he held the view that one cannot be certain of the permanent value of strictly contemporary art, to leave Harvard only works that he believed to be of lasting importance." Once, when criticizing the dogmatism of Bernard Berenson, Sachs repeated this point: "The final word is ultimately made by the many, not by one, and museums everywhere must make the materials available for judgment."

One might at first sight think that such reliance on an artist's popularity collided with Sachs's elitist views of culture, which depended on a small cadre of trained experts to instruct the public. Yet the idea of tolerating a diversity of artworks was not merely an academic notion but also an argument born of the art market. For Sachs, an art market was still inherently elitist, not solely because of its intellectual standards, but because of the required financial standing of the buyers. On this calculus—which still involved only elites, if now financial ones—one can see that modern art was valued simply because others valued it.

The crucial "others" for Sachs were the Europeans, whose art market he most favored. If Sachs's writings reveal a basic insistence that modern art had already become a foregone conclusion among serious students of the art world, it is because of the high prices it fetched on the modern art market and modern art's widespread popularity in Europe. In the early 1920s, as George Roeder noted in *Forum of Uncertainty*, "The high prices regularly paid for works by Cézanne, Matisse and Picasso did help make modern paintings seem respectable." For example, in 1922 one Cézanne painting fetched twenty-two thousand dollars at an auction, and museums spent thousands of dollars for each modern painting they bought. From his very earliest days in the art world, Sachs always made a connection between price and value; in fact, he chose to collect drawings because it was the one medium in which he could afford to purchase masterpieces. He was fond of repeating the saying, "Acquire only the best of a type and be sure to hunt only where you can afford the best."

But for Sachs it was the acceptance of modern art by Europeans that was most persuasive. Like Norton, Sachs had no difficulty starkly identifying America's artistic limits and its profound dependence on European culture. He wrote in 1954 that "no gulf separates American art from the other cultures" and explained that "we have left for last the consideration of American graphic art, for thus only can we visualize in proper perspective and with necessary humility the inescapable link between European and American art." For Sachs, the experience of taming the frontier—a decisive event in history for so many critics of

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American culture—merely delayed America's civilizing process: "The United States was long isolationist in art as in politics. We were pre-occupied with developing a vast continent. We took little note of the currents and counter-currents, the ferment of European art." Whatever art Americans produced contained no broadly distinguishing traits, only "specifically American nuances and overtones."

America had a lot to learn from Europe, according to Sachs. Its best hope of creating a worthwhile civilization was to take careful notes on what is happening across the ocean and duplicate it, he thought. His concern that American judgment was still inferior to European judgment is well illustrated in a letter to Berenson two years before MOMA's founding. The letter was about an Italian lecturer that Berenson had recommended to Sachs for Harvard:

> May I say to you in confidence, however, that his three lectures at the Fogg Museum were a distinct disappointment: Why do so many of our foreign friends think that anything is good enough for America?! . . . Unless our European friends are prepared to court such an [opinion] they had better just visit and not lecture.

In the founding of the Museum of Modern Art, in which Sachs played a crucial role, America did not launch a bold defense of American artistic efforts—in a controversial move, its first show was of four masters of the School of Paris. Instead, MOMA's first visitors saw a defense of American philanthropy and the aesthetic judgment of its wealthiest patrons and affiliated experts, most prominently, Paul J. Sachs and Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

V

MOMA was the first and greatest test of Sachs's ideas about the curatorial profession, not to mention the much more complex notion that abstract graphic works were true art. From its inception, MOMA operated unlike any other museum of the time, for it followed the principles that Sachs advocated for museum management: making the director the supreme planner and chief executive officer and stressing the museum's function as an educational institution. During his ten years as trustee of the museum, Sachs saw that MOMA remained true to those principles.

As a consequence of having an independent-minded director, MOMA sponsored exhibits that no other museum at the time would have shown—among them, the Machine Art exhibit and a retrospective of the "primitives" of Morris Hirshfield, a retired Brooklyn manufacturer who had no formal artistic training. Each exhibit had a unique genesis,

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marking the peculiar interest of one of the many people affiliated with the museum, but that they were displayed at all was owing to one man, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., perhaps Sachs's greatest and most influential student. Barr had practically unlimited control over the museum's actions. The members of the board of trustees occasionally indulged their own pet interests, but the museum for the most part expressed Barr's will and purpose. To Sachs, this deference to professional expertise was essential to any museum's survival. He thought that strong and autonomous leadership by the curator was particularly necessary for the appreciation of modern art:

> I think that [it is] perfectly clear . . . that it doesn't work for committees to arrange shows. That's why we never formed a collection of modern art in the first fifty years of the twentieth-century at the Museum of Fine Arts—because the trustees had too much say. They were using their power as trustees, forgetting that that was a professional job—to make selections—and they would come from State Street or their law offices, and one would say "I like it" and another would say "I don't like it." Well, what the hell difference does it make whether they like it or not? What we wanted was a professional opinion.

There have been better defenses of modern art in this century—some that, in fact, did not rely on "professionals" to justify the new, abstract movement in painting and sculpture. Yet this had always been Sachs's defense of modern art; he certainly would not have wanted every museum to be like MOMA, but MOMA represented the thinking of a significant portion of the aesthetic elite, and Sachs welcomed its existence. When he considered MOMA's legacy, which, as a founding father, he was frequently asked to do, he emphasized the museum's contribution to the public's acceptance of modern art. "The museum changed the climate of public opinion from one of hostility to one that is today open-minded and receptive to all aspects of modern art," he concluded.

Sachs had the rare pleasure of seeing his ideas succeed, and not merely with regards to modern art. During World War II, Sachs asserted American artistic pre-eminence in the world by helping to obtain for American museums the European masterpieces imperiled by the war. Sachs also encouraged many of Europe's best art scholars to come to America and take up residence in the country's universities. Sachs's own pupil, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., did his part for American art appreciation by extending MOMA's cultural significance throughout the world. Sachs's entire career had been the bridge between Norton's ideas of a cultural elite with a bias toward historicism and a society whose strength was unrivaled in the world and whose interests tended toward the new.

Sachs never left Cambridge after arriving in 1914, moving from Shady Hill to a hotel suite to another home. After retiring from the faculty in

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1948, he spent his time collecting his papers and writing a memoir. On February 17, 1965, at the age of eighty-six, Sachs collapsed, dead, on his desk. Though much of his work was done, Sachs apparently was not yet ready to go. Writing for his sixty-fifth college reunion—a collection of pieces published after his death—he had sent the following brief message: "Best wishes for the next decade."

Master, master, we perish.

—Luke 8:24

MEG SCHOERKE

The night before my father died, his eyes
turned a profounder blue, dark as an ocean.
He did not fight against his breath's set motion,
but eased into the respirator's tides,
like a weak swimmer floating on cold waves
he fears, in hopes they'll carry him to shore,
who asks (a sudden calm as yet unlooked for)
whether the water drowns a man, or saves.

✪ MEG SCHOERKE teaches in the English department and for the Women's Studies Program at Washington University, St. Louis.

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Great Man at Work

Michelet Reconsidered

EUGEN WEBER

"SOME ARE BORN SPANISH, some English or German; I was born rue du faubourg Saint-Denis, in the choir of a secularized church, somber, humid. . . ." Thus Jules Michelet, the greatest French historian of the nineteenth century, looking back on his beginnings in the days when his father, a small printer, was trying to make ends meet under Napoleon's stern rule. Born in 1798, "like a blade of grass deprived of sunlight between two Paris flagstones," raised in poverty, in need, in the Paris street, young Jules sounds rather like an earlier version of Victor Hugo's Gavroche—a Gavroche who got away and ended in the university, not on the barricades. *Paris mène à tout.* The education it offers can lead to greatness, as to crime. For the straitened artisan's son, the museum of French monuments, newly founded, proved a revelation; the almost new cemetery of Père Lachaise provided inspiration; the streets of Paris offered instant documentation: a concentrated summary of French history even before he began to read history, let alone to write it.

"The intellectual passions have devoured my youth." All kinds of passions: of History, of France, of the People—the men and women in the street—all partisan, all bracing. One passion alone is missing. There is no trace of those Napoleonic glories to which Julien Sorel, Alfred de Musset, and other *enfants du siècle* looked back with so much longing. Michelet's youth has little time for their hankerings. He is a self-made man, an early model of the scholarship boy: his first tutor an old Jacobin, he learns Latin, gets into college—which he hates because the other students despise his poverty, comes out first in the Concours Général of 1815—the national competition open to the best students. Out of the constricted environment of the lower middle class, by dint of exams and scholarly triumphs, the bookish boy breaks into a freer, wider world of humanism and letters. He meets François Guizot—perhaps the first,

✪ EUGEN WEBER is the Joan Palevsky Professor of Modern European History at the University of California, Los Angeles. His latest book, *My France*, has just been published by Harvard University Press.

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though not the last history professor to run a country—who, in the early years of Restoration, still teaches at the Sorbonne. He attends his lectures and finds a patron in him.

In his recent book on Michelet,* Professor Arthur Mitzman refers to "upward mobility and continued vertical dependency on mother and father substitutes," which is one way to describe the way we make our way in the academy. But Guizot is otherwise important for Michelet as well: he reveals a new approach to the history that he talks and writes. In the French psychological tradition, Guizot explains historical actions and actors in terms of present motives and experience: beneath the toga, armor, or business suit, men were what they still are now. We now denounce this as anachronism, but it can offer lessons in political understanding. Encouraged to look around at his own times, Michelet would grasp the importance of human initiatives in the machinery of historical action, would learn to look for gestures, words, and details that revealed the person beneath the personality. Then, rather unexpectedly, Guizot showed interest in the common people and tried to winkle out what they thought. One of his lectures on Merovingian France presented the peasantry reacting to the tyranny of their masters by inventing legends of the saints, projecting on the saints those moral values of which oppression deprived them. Religious imagination can reveal unspoken aspirations. Michelet would plumb it in his turn. Above all, Guizot, a liberal, insisted on the importance of free will and supported the monk Pelagius against St. Augustine. Michelet—who later broke with his old master turned reactionary—always praised his sense of moral freedom.

This is important, because early nineteenth-century philosophy continued the struggle between the heirs of those Enlightened philosophers who believed that social and physical facts were subject to necessary laws and the liberals who considered human nature free and recognized man's vocation for freedom. Was man free or not? The atmosphere of Restoration France could lead one to doubt it. Guizot's lessons confirmed past experience. Success in his youthful striving had convinced Michelet (as it would his later admirer, Charles Péguy) that *labor omnia vincit*: work conquers all. His Jacobin education taught that necessity can be overcome by deliberate acts of will: ideas help to explain events; they also determine them. His Parisian impressions instilled a sense of crowds, their significance, their moods, their movements in the street; but it was Guizot who placed experience in a broader context. The mature Michelet praised his interest in the social sources of political events and in the history of ideas that can set both society and political

* *Michelet, Historian: Rebirth and Romanticism in Nineteenth-Century France.* Yale University Press. $35. For this essay I have also drawn from Paul Viallaneix's *La Voie royale* (Paris, Flammarion, 1971).

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events on fire: "Analysis of social and intellectual acts, deeds, facts, events, did not exist before him." Grinding a sharper ax than Guizot had done, Michelet would carry such analysis further.

But no man has one master, and few bookish minds look exclusively to living examples. Among the dead, still in those years very much alive, Rousseau, Voltaire, were major inspirations. The one for his style: conversational, colorful, unconventional, free of academic stiffness. The other for substance. Guizot taught Michelet the use of telling anecdotes. From Voltaire he learned scorn for mere chronicles and chronologies, interest not just in great personalities and their doings, or just in massive movements, but in the *spirit* of a time, its *substantifique moëlle*, as Voltaire put it—that substantive marrow on which manners, morals, laws, values, frames of mind all fed. So: no pedantic narrative, no stilted principles of composition, no limits to the historian's reach: history would provide an *Essay on Manners* in the Voltairean manner.

One more shade awaited his turn to whisper in the apprentice's ear, and, when he did, his words proved fundamental. In the early 1820s Michelet discovered the work of Giambattista Vico, the eighteenth-century, Naples-born philosopher and historian, then almost ignored. "Frenzy of Vico, incredible enthusiasm for him." What does Michelet find in the Neapolitan that "makes him drunk"? Vico turns history from would-be science into art. Anti-Cartesian, he denies the subjection of history to reason. History, where social and political currents flow together, deals with that vast part of human experience where not truth or fact but probability rules. Vico's "new science" pays little heed to dates and heroes, much attention to popular psychology and what we now describe as *mentalités*: that spirit of time and place of which significant anecdotes, customs, laws, and legends are more expressive, hence significant, than political events. Speech tells us more than treaties—or than treatises. Philologists have more to relate than philosophers. In 1824 Michelet wants to write an essay on national character as illuminated by vocabulary. Society is an array of symbols, past societies leave behind their mazy ruins for social psychologists to study. That is real history. Away with scientific pretensions: erudite, dozy, bureaucratic, sterile. Historians, abandon the dreary wastes of scientific history, impersonal, inhuman! And, if historians won't, one historian will. In the day of Balzac, Michelet presents a fresco equivalent to the Human Comedy: peasants, workers, merchants, men-at-arms incarnate the dreams and passions of their time more massively than kings or princes.

By the time he was thirty, Michelet had looked at history from every side. He rejected the *picturesque* school as superficial: "It says nothing about art, religion, law, or even geography, and it treats inner life as if it did not exist." He rejected the *philosophical* school as dry and boring,

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always analyzing, never telling a tale: "piles of stones with no heart, and no feeling for our [historians'] art." The one offered too many details, the other too many abstractions. The *political* school (Thiers, Guizot) provided the facts but scorned the laws that affect events. Those interested in laws of history, on the other hand, like the great Augustin Thierry, treated them as if they were fatally determined: "racial, ideological, partisan, fatalist." Michelet wants to pick the best from all and write a freer history, where people make themselves. History is organic like a plant, says Herder. History is a spiral upward bent, says Vico. History is a synthetic process, active, never static, says Michelet: vision of a process that substitutes an untidy self-generating universe to the grand determined constructions of the eighteenth century.

Michelet doesn't just invent a new way of doing history, he teaches it in an exceptional way. In 1892 he writes to an old student, now himself a teacher, who had asked for his lecture notes: "My lectures won't be much use to you: there are too many generalizations. You have to interest your students with anecdotes and colorful details. It is essential to amuse them. Children only remember what interests them and, generally, the amusing details are also the most useful to know."

Amusing details can be culled from books, but they have to be presented in a living context. General ideas must be irrigated by substance; and by personalities—foremost that of the author himself. Michelet does not write Stendhal's *Souvenirs d'Egotisme,* but he shares the self-preoccupation of his generation, their predisposition to self-revelation in the manner of Rousseau, their sympathy for others equally fascinated by their fascinating selves, their inclination to identify with places, moments, or natural phenomena. For Michelet, "history is a violent moral chemistry in which my individual passions turn into generalities; where my peoples become myself and my self returns to animate my peoples." Author and subject, book and author are one—their identity constantly reaffirmed. His soul, he says, is made of paper, his books represent his *âme de papier*; but the paper is singed by passion, especially political passion.

The July days of 1830, which replaced reactionary Bourbons with an Orléans monarchy expected to be less reactionary, provided an exalting experience. "In those memorable days a great light shone, and I perceived France." France as a living being that suffers, loves, hates, works, but that can never die, because its offspring provide a source of eternal rebirth. French History illustrates the triumph of Life over Death. But all history does that: "I define history, *Resurrection,*" says Michelet.

One of the first terrains where the historian tried his hand at resurrectionism was the National Archives, where he was appointed,

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thanks to Guizot's influence, in the wake of the July Revolution. Symbolically, Michelet entered the shabby, tumbledown premises of the Palais Soubise where the Archives dwelt (and still, much renovated, continue today) on November 2, 1830: *Jour des Morts*. He had not been trained for archival work, he knew no paleography, his appointment was based less on personal worth than on political patronage. Yet, in the twenty-two years he served as head of the historical section, he proved himself a pioneer among pioneers. He denounced the ongoing plunder and pilfering of provincial collections and reordered "the army of documents—stifled souls" that he could hear complaining in low voices along the lonely passages where they were left to molder.

This is where Michelet's references to Oedipus fit in. Mitzman welcomes his "awareness and partial acceptance of incestuous impulse." But Michelet's Oedipus is not the parricide, but the riddle-solver. Documents have a voice. What they say is not always clear, let alone unequivocal; so the historian, like Oedipus, must elucidate their secrets, interpret their enigmas. The dead never understand just why they lived, because life becomes intelligible only when death has brought it to an end. When they endow dead lives with meaning, historians bring the dead to life. That is why documents of all kinds are so important, and so are the Archives where they rest. Michelet the archivist took steps to preserve papyri and parchments, bound registers and series, laid down rules for drawing up inventories that we still use today, and norms for the descriptive notes inventories contain. He began himself to use and cite documents in his studies.

He has since been denounced as a sort of Schliemann of archival archeology. The fact remains that, in the 1830s and the 1840s, he pioneered archival studies. If Michelet's use of documents was not as thorough or systematic as we today would like, he might reply that the poetical comprehension of Romantic empathy comes closer to understanding than references alone. So, he would argue, does the creative passion that fed upon him and on which he fed. Nothing was more absorbing than his work. In 1832 he was so fascinated by a new book that he completely ignored the cholera epidemic raging round him.

Michelet loves metaphor. He is pregnant with history, he grazes it, gulps it down, gnaws at it, consumes it as it consumes him ("I have drunk too much the dark blood of the dead." "Robespierre eats my marrow and my bones.") He also rows in it ("I row with Louis XI") and swims ("I swim in Richelieu"); he feeds on pictures, thrives on overviews, devours subjects before he regurgitates them pulsating with life. As the 1830s end, Augustin Thierry, grown blind, has the latest volume of Michelet's French history (volume 4 on the end of the Middle Ages) read aloud and is dazzled by it: "Parts of it," he writes the author, "are diabolic. The

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dead dance through the pages . . . they whirl . . ." and the breathless reader with them.

The stimulation kindled in his readers reflects the author's flame. Since the 1820s, Michelet sends his manuscripts to the printer chapter by chapter, with the kind of feverish urgency reminiscent of Balzac's *feuilletons*. When it comes to understanding, feeling, communicating, all is urgent. Go to the market, Michelet tells his students, the way Dante did, to observe and reflect. "Plunge into life, into this living sea of people; then only will you understand the books—or do without them." He follows his own advice, watches his subject, lives with it, identifies with it, becomes one with it: *moi-Paris*, he writes—I Middle Ages, I Revolution, I People . . . and insect or mountain or ocean or bird. Long after Michelet died, Charles Maurras was to blame him for thinking with his heart. But thinking only with the head makes sterile reasoners.

Empathy was the great Romantic trick; Michelet turned it into a scholarly method. When he wanted to conceive "the somber monotony of the Middle Ages," he recalled the conditions of his childhood as Napoleon's empire drew to an end: *Dies irae, dies illa*. "Today this victorious epoch looks bright. But then all was dark. Somber lay France; the light shone solely on the army." The boredom Michelet deplores in the Middle Ages that, he tells us, yawned themselves to death, he denounces in the Napoleonic tyranny that nurtured similarly noxious dreams and murderous illusions. And the Middle Ages reflect back on his day. In 1839, he finds in contemporary Lyon what he had just described in his volume on the Middle Ages: a life that is harsh, yet less harsh than it is monotonous, somber, sunless. "Great hatreds are sure to hatch out of these great sorrows."

Such back and forthing between reading, lectures, and lived experience goes on all the time. When in the spring of 1842 his first real love, Madame Desmolins, lay dying, his lectures turned on the unreality of death: "Death doesn't exist—*La mort n'est pas*." When in 1848 he fell in love with his second wife, Athenaïs, he began a course of lectures on love. The symbiosis may be a bit extreme, but that too was part of his charismatic teaching. Students like Jules Vallès, one of the many he inspired, remember making for his dreary lecture room on winter evenings "the way one goes towards a fire to get warm."

In Michelet, the teacher becomes an actor, the scholar deliberately sets out to seduce. But what seduces most, and quite self-consciously, are his innovations. He invents comparative history. In 1830 he writes a history of the world and insists that you can understand and explain France only in broader context. Nor can you describe the Renaissance in France as if it took place in France alone: "You have to write it in Italy and Germany first, in terms of Michelangelo and of Dürer." He invents

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historical geography. "Before me," he writes in a letter of 1833, "no one spoke of geography as a historian. No one tried a history of medieval art. Even Victor Hugo no more than tiptoed around Notre Dame. I showed how that stone plant sprouted and growed." The claim is not too strong. It was Michelet who discovered the historical possibilities of iconographic and symbolic documents: cathedrals, their sculptures and stained glass, churches with their sacred messages and naive decorations. But also Hogarth, whose *Gate of Calais* centered on a vast hunk of roast beef, illustrates physical and dietary differences between eighteenth-century France and England; or Piranesi, whose dark, ominous *Carceri* he treats as symbols of the Old Regime. He may well be the first historian who used portraits to comment on the personalities they depicted: John Law, Madame Roland, Charlotte Corday. . . . Even his private hang-ups would be put to use: fascinated by little girls, the twelve-year-old Michelet had developed his "voluptuous imagination," becoming a voyeur and, above all, a fantasizer. The older he got, the more he tended to view history in terms of alcoves and privies. This attracted comment in his time and since; yet—then, at least—it helped restore some balance to a history traditionally focused on thrones, altars, and battlefields.

What all this meant has to be seen in perspective. Michelet had studied not history but letters: philosophy, rhetoric, the classics. Though world and ancient history were taught in the Sorbonne, there were no history courses that we would recognize in French colleges and lycées. When Michelet himself began to teach and write history in the 1820s, the sort of thing he did was necessarily philosophical and moral, following the trail that he himself had followed and, for a while, prolonged. Scholars—*érudits*—edited texts and chronicles. Historians synthesized, narrated, presented an argument, illustrated a philosophical, religious, or political thesis. Michelet wanted to be more than a polemicist and other than a poet. Mined in the archives, his history was archival, documented, before it was brought to life by imagination. Nevertheless, when elected to the Collège de France in 1838, the chair he held, until he was turfed out in 1852 for political reasons, was one of History and Morality.

It need not surprise us, in these circumstances, that the kind of history Michelet taught and wrote, though highly original in its time and impressive to such as Leopold von Ranke, was at least as "moral" as it was "factual." What morality, then, what philosophy inspired his history? To say he was a Romantic asserts too much, or not enough. Michelet himself tended to discount Romanticism as sterile: much talent, few new ideas, turbulent vigor that brings forth no fruit. We don't have to agree with him (I do not) to note that, for Michelet, true

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productivity was quiet, less clamorous, flaunting, agitated. His popular origins had taught him prudence and suspicion of display, his austere mother (on whose influence Mitzman has much to say) inculcated frugality and temperance, above all passion for work. His artisanal experience instilled discipline, patience, regular habits, and work habits: not dilettantism but "concentration," scrupulous accounts, early hours, a pretty rigid timetable. His assistants arrived at seven every morning to find him already at his desk. Even when one does not work to live, one lives to work.

It is easy to see how such values set him apart from contemporary Romantics. Yet Michelet remained Romantic, though apart. France is a person. Times have spirit and soul. Faith can be reconciled with freedom. Deprived of sentiment, reason falters. Free spirit, humanist, and impenitent sensualist, it is in this context that Michelet's philosophy must be viewed. Conflict, tension, and reconciliation provide its dynamic. The forces that move us are and remain obscure. Those that we *think* move us provide at least a hint. Michelet, like Vico, thought little of official heroes, much of humble ones. He sought to rescue these from obscurity, less individually than collectively. His hero was The People. In 1847, when he explained his perspective on history, he said this very clearly: *né peuple, nous allions au peuple*. The phrase is not easy to translate. Perhaps "Born of the people, we [the authorial plural] made for the people, were drawn to it," comes closest. That, for Michelet, would be the royal road that furnishes the title of Paul Viallaneix's brilliant semi-biography, *La Voie royale*, and the inspiration of Michelet's writings on France and on the French.

In theory, The People includes all but the upper classes, idle, oppressive, unproductive. In practice, it represents mostly artisans, little people, modest middling folk. The proletariat had only just begun to tiptoe to the stage. The peasant masses were idealized by urban intellectual fantasies—as unreal as Balzac's pejorative sketches in *Les Paysans*. It does not much matter. The future lies with honest workmen and their values: work, family, fatherland. *Travail, famille, patrie*—a trio as powerfully evocative in French ideology as *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*; and born of a more popular tradition.

In this respect, Michelet has much in common with a younger lyrical populist, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809–1865). Michelet was the son of a master printer; Proudhon was a printer himself. Both were (with varying horizons and varying success) aspiring bourgeois; but eighteenth-century bourgeois—patriotic, assertive, believers in progress, social permeability, social promotion, relying on the people, not fazed by it as the nineteenth-century bourgeois were beginning to be. Both were democratic, both national populists, both believed that the first task of

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democracy is to allow workers to live in dignity on their work and that, in revolutionary priorities, Liberty took precedence over Equality. Liberty, said Michelet, in a formula Proudhon would not reject, is the first of social reforms. That was why, around 1848, we find Michelet busy writing a revolutionary history of the Revolution in which the foundation myth of republics to come is struck out at a heat; why, in 1851, he sends the published volumes to Proudhon who is in prison, put there by a Second Republic turned reactionary; why Proudhon (who had not thought much of him till then) heartily praised his work. Mitzman has written a good page on their relation.

For Michelet, as for Proudhon, parts of the Revolution had best never have happened. Both hated Robespierre, both disliked the Terror; and Michelet made clear that the men of the Terror served democracy as ill as Inquisitors had served the Church. But Michelet had grown up in a Jacobin atmosphere; his father had printed the pamphlets of Babeuf's Equalitarians. The smell of those days was still in his nostrils when he described the Revolution roaring "like a voice of the Ocean," the birth of "Romantic republicanism with a hundred heads and a thousand chapels," the destructive tremors that inequality generated, the subterranean currents that flowed from the 1790s into the social romanticism of 1848. History is the great drama of human experience: of man's struggle against fate, of spirit operating on brute matter, of the working out of France's messianic role. Michelet, who is fascinated by the movement of a land from geography to history, from fact to artifact, wants to trace the secret behind the making of a nation, the unification of so many diverse peoples, cities, provinces, currents of thought, and traditions into one people—that living being France. He cannot play down the role of the Revolution in this context, or even that of Robespierre whom he so dislikes but whom he leaves on a final tribute. But such equity is easier at a distance than when one's boisterous heroes are trampling the lawn.

As he rose in the world, Michelet never forgot the poor among whom he grew up, the *petit peuple* pitched and tossed between industrial slavery and unemployment. As a tutor in Louis-Philippe's royal palace, as a professor at the Collège de France, he had collected money to aid them, had organized his students to collect and distribute subsidies. Revolutions in 1830 and 1848 filled him with enthusiasm; reaction following on their heels left him depressed and indignant. But he could see around him, even (Mitzman argues) in his own home, that The People he idealized was not to be trusted. In June 1848, when rebellious workers had built a barricade under his own windows, they had been told that their activities endangered a famous scholar and a people's friend, and they answered only, "Who is Michelet?" In 1850 his beloved second wife, whom he identified with the pure and childlike virtues of

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the folk, had insisted, against his principles, on baptizing their newborn son who died in infancy. Popular instinct could clearly not be trusted. Progressive intellectuals like the progressive press have no effect on *le peuple*: they leave most women Catholic, they leave most men Bonapartist. On June 27, 1848, after the *peuple's* insurrection had been drowned in blood, Michelet notes briefly: "Felt the urgency of popular education."

Education or not, he continued to call himself a socialist. In the United States we would probably call him a liberal. Viallaneix, who knows him well, describes him as instinctively socialist. Witnessing the birth of yet another republic, the Third, on September 4, 1870, Michelet himself pictured his heart as "all socialist." Less than nine months later, the Commune burned down the Paris town hall with its precious archives. The news brought on a heart attack. "When you call yourself the Commune, you don't destroy its living symbol. It is the soul of France, all of its traditions, that they have levelled." The preface to his last work, a history of the nineteenth century, published in 1872, would relate socialism to factories and barracks, the great modern engines of fatality, hence, in Michelet's vocabulary, of evil.

Formed by the experience of his youth, the historian's values were reformed by the experience of old age. He had overcome personal disillusion. He would not resist the wanton destruction of monuments and archives. His reaction reminds one of the response a distinguished French historian, who is also a high official of the Cour des Comptes (the French Court of Accounts), made to a question about the Commune: "They burnt my archives." The most objective judgment is oft, alas, subjective.

Before his heart attacks, however, Michelet had reflected deeply on the problems of democracy and of the people. He prized justice and fraternity above all things, yet knew that justice hardened into law is no longer justice, that fraternity instituted by decree can never be fraternal. How could the conundrum be resolved? Only by education, by humanity inculcated, above all by *Love*. The moral sovereignty of love can irrigate popular sovereignty. To creeping impersonality and the rigidities of stratification, codification, bureaucratization, Michelet opposed love as an introduction to socialization, to fraternity, to community.

Michelet lived in an age when models of social relations could be inspired by idealized recollections of youthful friendships. *The Banquet*, undertaken in 1854 but left unfinished, reflects this. It sketches the fraternal conditions in which the poor would share the bread of the rich. All members of the same nation need not share alike, but all must share together. The ideal was not too farfetched. Michelet's own triumph over misery, the popular triumph over tyranny in 1830, argued for will against

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necessity, for liberty against apparent fate. The laws of history are not constraining but dynamic. Will, energy, and progress work to make peoples make themselves, turn geography into history, tame nature into fatherlands. Human industry fertilizes land, changes the course of rivers, cuts open mountainsides, discovers and works metals. "The world is ours to take. We shall take it. Once matter is no more than the expression of our thought (once it has been molded by our will), we run no risk in investing it with our love." After matter, folk; then society.

Social concerns and their resolution through love and fraternity loomed especially large after 1852 when Michelet's political sympathies led to the loss of both his jobs: at the Archives and at the Collège de France. This meant a grievous loss of income and relatively straitened circumstances as Michelet henceforth lived on royalties alone. More serious for the creative historian was the fact that his scholarly life had been based on the interaction of archival research, the lectures he prepared, the books he was writing. After 1852 the books alone were left, unirrigated by documents, unlivened by the responses to his open lectures. Michelet's production was to reflect this change. In 1853 the last volume of his *French Revolution* appeared, and the following year *Women in the Revolution*, based on the same research, came out. Thereafter, the historical spring tarries.

After 1852, with Michelet then only in his fifties, we witness a sort of intellectual detumescence. The obsession slackens, the wild excitement of creation sags, the travail of bringing the past to life loses its poignancy. The *History of France* continues to appear volume by volume, but it reads more like a chore than like inspiration. A rival commitment has relaxed the tensions that once drove him. The voyeur can indulge himself watching Athenaïs cut her toenails, seeking to catch glimpses of flesh beneath the petticoats. The blood of Athenaïs fascinates more than the gore of the dead. Then there are commercial considerations. Popular essays on nature and society sell better than hefty tomes: *The Bird* (1856), *The Insect* (1857), *Love* (1858), *Woman* (1859), *The Sea* (1861), *The Sorceress* (1862). . . .

A drought of sources accounts for this, no doubt, and for Michelet's voluntary exile from Paris after his dismissal. But there was also Michelet's disgruntlement with the French people, with France, with the Paris he had loved. Fluctuating, never foundering, as its device asserts, Paris was beautiful because, like history, it was ever in movement, ever becoming, taking and changing shape. Its monuments themselves were symbols of historical moments and of the ideas that gave them form: Notre Dame, the Invalides, the Place de Grève with its City Hall. The capital did not simply offer an education, it was education on the hoof, framework and memorial of private and collective life. After

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1852 Michelet falls out of love with Paris, and to some extent with history, too. He turns to study nature, to seek in it that innocence The People had denied him; he suffers to discover that even ants have slaves. Basically, however, as Taine observed astutely, writing about birds and insects did not really change Michelet's orientation; it merely extended his reach. Michelet loved cats. Cats talked to him, when they did not tease him. The first time Athenaïs came to see him, she found a cat lying on his manuscript. The two communed in this as in other passions: Gabriel Monod, once Michelet's student and an influential historian in his own right, has edited into a charming study the copious notes that Michelet's widow left. Cats may have taught this sensitive man a respect for animal personality, otherwise rare in the 1850s. But natural sympathies did so too. Taine reminds us: "He had pleaded for little people, simple people, children. Now he pleads for animals and birds."

That heroism of the spirit that Vico taught Michelet to value could be discerned in the humble as well as in the great. He would reveal it in beasts, as he had done in humans. Scorn of animals is even more absurd than class hatred. The lizard for whom a fly is a feast is not very different from the Italian peasant who, in Michelet's own day, still had to feed upon boiled grass and greens. Each has his own dignity, each shares in the natural solidarity of all. Michelet may be the patron not just of archival research but of ecologists too.

At any rate, we see how wide Michelet's idea of love extends. Even the simplest forms of love and the most primitive have their uses: sex can provide the introduction to affection, particular affection can extend to broader sociabilities that, in turn, may rise to true fraternity. This brings us to the question of Michelet's relations with women, his views on relations between men and women, on sex, and on the other sex. The simple answer is that his views evolved. The woman problem in Michelet's day was a live subject. The Revolution first raised then stifled it. The rights of man, quite logically, did not mean the rights of women. The Romantic generation of 1820 and after never stopped talking about the issue. Women were pure, virtuous, innocent, chaste, superstitious, reactionary, anti-revolutionary. They were also fragile, capricious, corrupt, harbingers of disorder in family and society. Yet women were crucial to the new order: new model men needed new model mothers. Michelet's evolution would touch on all these things.

His first wife, Pauline, the mistress whom he married when she found herself pregnant, began as a convenience but became an inconvenience. She provided a bedmate and a housekeeper, functions that covered the essentials of contemporary marriage. Unfortunately, jealous of her rival, Clio, she took to drink and nagging. There was a reason for her discontent. Michelet's years with Pauline provide an excellent descrip-

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tion of the scholar as monomaniac. Launched on his career, drunk with history, the upwardly mobile scholar had no time for distractions. His task allowed "no sharing of time and energy. One must live and die as a book, not a man." He lived. She died—as Mitzman puts it—of drink, tuberculosis, and neglect. Her death removed what had become a nuisance, but filled the negligent husband with understandable guilt. Mitzman quotes the reflections that he jotted down on the day of her death:

> What a hard and denatured thing is art and science, that we desert for it those who love us. How many long Sundays I left her alone. . . . Alas, it's at the expense of her happiness and her life that I did all that I did. This poor self [*moi*] who has died today, I had reduced to being my sensual self [*moi sensuel*]; if I had put her in contact with my whole soul, she would have been happy, would have lived.

It is not clear how much soul contact there could be between ill-suited mates. As Michelet confided in another note, culture did not interest Pauline: "She was fit only for love" and housekeeping, and got enough of neither. In her wake, Michelet found that maids could keep his house clean and his bed warm with far less fuss. His intellectual, sentimental needs, meanwhile, were served by an intense though brief encounter with the married mother of one of his students. Though probably platonic (the lady soon died of cancer), Madame Dumesnil contributed much-needed romantic inspiration, while maids provided the sexual relief. These arrangements, not unusual in their time, carried him through several productive years, to the fateful meeting with Athenaïs Miallaret and remarriage.

Pauline had not got enough of love or housekeeping. Athenaïs had little propensity for either; she entertained literary ambitions. There was mutual love now, and shared literary enterprise, with Athenaïs acting as secretary and research assistant. But sex was difficult, sporadic, precarious. In March 1849, when they were married, Athenaïs was twenty-three, Michelet fifty-one, his daughter Adèle twenty-six. The elderly groom of a reticent partner, father of a resentful daughter older than his wife, was fearfully attentive. Athenaïs would only be deflowered five months after the wedding. She "suffered everything with sweetness . . . looked at the portrait of her father and wept while embracing me." Mitzman attributes her condition to vaginismus, and he is most likely right. In brief, chronic constipation seems to have constricted the vagina and made intercourse painful, often impossible. No wonder Michelet kept a weather eye on the way his frail wife functioned, noting her digestion, bowel movements, hemorrhoids, and, of course, the painful

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menses—that "divine rhythm which, month by month, measures time." No wonder, either, that he rationalized his sexual frustrations by exalting notions of sacrifice and glorifying the less fleshly aspects of the relationship. As Joe E. Brown advised Jack Lemmon, at the end of *Some Like It Hot*, nothing is perfect. But at least here was a marriage of true minds, a fraternal union to fit his principles of association and inspire the book *Woman* that he was going to publish in 1859.

Michelet's views on that subject have evoked diatribes against male chauvinism and phallocracy, now recognized as stepping-stones to fascism. Certainly, even enlightened nineteenth-century men, however sympathetic to the women's cause, must seem dangerously prejudiced to twentieth-century readers, whose consciousness has been raised beyond anachronism. Yet few eccentrics in his time were more advanced than Michelet. He disapproved of exploitation at all levels, mutual or one-way. He did not like demanding bourgeois wives whose exigencies exhausted "serious productive men." But he disliked more inconsiderate males who made their wives their Christmas trees or else their Sunday outing. He did not regard women as inferiors, but as *potentially* equal others; not equal in the present, never biologically equal ever, but capable of honorable association based on education and on recognition of "natural" differences.

True, Michelet's ideal focused on marriage and maternity, in which women would function less as active partners than as helpmates and vessels of desire. But that was the perspective of the time. Given that context, however, his point was to argue against mistakes he once had made himself, to condemn situations where woman is only a mother or only a daughter, never a person in her own right, to warn against prevailing prejudice. He denounced the "vulgar error" that woman's brain was inferior to that of man. He took issue with traditional views of female impurity: woman was not impure, but productive of life. He even wrote a chapter (largely suppressed in printing) on women's right to sexual pleasure and on man's duty to bring his partner to orgasm (woman "is slower and only begins when he is through"). Yet woman's physical constitution, her relative weakness, her recurrent afflictions, made her dependent and subordinate. And menstruation inescapably affected her social and productive activities. Humiliated by nature, woman is constantly ailing; even when in good health, she is unwell one week in four, always wounded, always in need of attention and care. Her inability to compete with men on truly equal terms had to be taken into consideration.

Michelet's medical references and his use of words that were taboo in his time shocked respectable readers as much as another book published that same year: *Madame Bovary*. The myth of physical and mental

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debilitation by menstruation that he perpetuated puts up the backs of contemporary feminists. Both nineteenth- and twentieth-century critics refuse to face the reality of Michelet's own day, his experience with Athenaïs, the memory of biological bondage for so many generations whose women, convinced by dire and recurrent suffering, believed in it as firmly as the men. The book must be read in the context of the age. If historians sometimes write the history of their times into that of the past they cover, Michelet did it in everything he wrote. *La Femme* is first-rate social history of the 1850s; and the questions it raises and the solutions it suggests are those of their time, not ours.

So, Michelet was ahead of his time, but still of it. He tried to improve the present, not subvert it. He insisted, *La Française est une personne*, pleaded for marriages kept alive by mutual affection and respect, mutually reinforcing and satisfying. The ideal wife is her husband's associate and true helpmate, educated for her task, but also for an understanding of the public affairs that they discuss together, and for access to a career—though not to all. Again, not altogether what our age expects. But we must understand that Michelet's writings on Woman, as on Love, were essentially about happy families.

Which also helps explain his hostility toward the Church. There were good political reasons for anti-clericalism in nineteenth-century France, especially in circles connected with education. The surging tides of religious fundamentalism in our own day and the obscurantism it carries along with it remind us of dangers that we have had time to forget. But religious intolerance and attendant political reaction were far more rabid 150 years ago. One has only to read Flaubert's *Bouvard et Pécuchet* to discover the dominion of priests over schoolteachers, a power they were seeking to extend to the higher reaches of the educational establishment. Freedom for Catholics to teach was rapidly becoming freedom for only Catholics to teach their way. As early as 1842, Michelet and Edgar Quinet, his colleague at the Collège de France, were busy defending the university against the Jesuits who maneuvered to control it. By 1847 the two professors' vehemence (and success) had led to their suspension. They would be reinstated after the revolution of 1848, but finally dismissed when reaction triumphed in 1851.

But there were extra-political reasons for Michelet's anti-clericalism, and these concerned family relations. Happy couples are two—plus their children. Christian couples were ménages à trois: husband, wife, and an intruder, her confessor. That had been the trouble with the Jesuits, too, whom Michelet started by attacking as counter-revolutionary, which they certainly were. Jesuits represented a political menace: a great war machine, as he described them, directed against democracy and freedom, utterly unproductive like all war machines, but great for aggres-

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sion. Worse yet, however, Jesuits and their ilk were agents of private and public corruption, teaching first their charges, then the whole nation, how to spy on, inform, denounce each other. "A whole people busy denouncing itself. Treason at one's hearth, the wife spying on her husband, the child on its mother. . . ." Mitzman is right when he describes the "mixture of rancor and personal idealism that inspired Michelet's attacks" on the clergy. But the idealism was highly realistic: "Our wives, our daughters, are educated, dominated, *by our enemies. Enemies of the modern spirit*, of liberty, of the future. . . ." Also of marriage and families, whose intimacy they envied, whose cohesion they threatened. Michelet's ideal society, says Roland Barthes, is matriarchal. It may even worship a mother goddess, as other Romantic creeds suggest. But never the reactionary god of the Catholic Church.

Such was the man who could say, with Terence, *humanum nil a me alienum puto*, whom Arthur Mitzman sets out to analyze, though hardly in the spirit of my preceding pages. His book, "a psychobiographical approach to Jules Michelet's middle years, shows the interdependence of personality development, cultural setting, and creative achievement." Its purpose is to "trace the social and intellectual problems discussed by Michelet back to their personal and historical context, to illuminate, through Michelet's personality and work, the achievements and dilemmas of both social romanticism and republicanism in mid-Nineteenth Century France." So the book is not exactly about Michelet writing history or the kind of history that Michelet wrote, but about the way in which Michelet's psyche affected his writing of history.

Psychologists and psychiatrists have been grazing on Michelet's psyche for a long time. His rationalizations, his bizarre dreams, his tendency to necrophilia and voyeurism, not least what Mitzman calls his anticipations of Freud, make him an analyst's dream. The shelves are stacked with the evidence he left us: fifty-six adult years spent writing sixty volumes on every kind of subject from Ancient Rome to insects, not counting his copious journals; but also a life that never ceases to call for attention. Constantly dying and reborn, always ill or not quite well, prey to dizziness, nausea, and sick headaches, brilliantly self-conscious, Michelet lures the psychological explorer. And thus it is with Mitzman.

Michelet himself, first in the long line of Michelet-analysts, always scratching at his buried feelings, attributed great weight to his early youth, "the age believed to be unconscious," that actually leaves behind "the most lasting marks." Mitzman, who shares this view, as I do, lays out young Michelet's problems: dominated by an austere mother, the forceful but threatening maternal ego ideal, allows him no adult male identity. The paternal ego ideal offers but a weak model. At the lycée, his peer group rejects him. "Michelet's solution was to immerse himself in

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his studies . . . to trade off the problematic paternal ego ideal for the powerful cultural ego ideal of the educational establishment while mixing it with the puritan inheritance of his mother." Quite.

Would it be too simple to explain the student's tenacity and grit by ambition and enthusiasm? He finds satisfaction in books and academic success, wins the support of influential teachers and patrons? That represents "upward mobility and continued vertical dependencies on mother and father substitutes." No wonder the historian's personality reflects disjunctions between potential sources of ego strength drawn from his upbringing and his cultural ego ideal. But we move on. By 1840, or thereabouts, Michelet tends "to join his intellectual values more in the horizontal peer dimension than in the vertical substitute-parent dimension he had adopted earlier." Not very surprising: elected to the Collège de France, he stands on his own feet.

There is a reluctance here about relating ideas to other ideas or, really, to the social and political context in which they grew. Their source must be more profound. "The notion of fraternity is a psychological version of what the social psychologists mean by peer relationships." The idealism of Michelet's patriotism and self-sacrifice is explained by "the increasing hold on him, after his father's death, of a punitive superego." His perception and resentment of the Church's grip on women is "redolent with Oedipal envy and aggression." Then there is the question of death. Mitzman insists on the role it plays in Michelet's mind-set, and he's right. He also insists on the relation between the death of Madame Dumesnil and Michelet's awareness of death, and there he is a bit less on the mark. There is no questioning the searing effect of her long agony, nor the cascade of rationalizations it inspired in him: death was not death but birth—a delivery *(accouchement)*, the pre-condition of every renaissance. But Michelet had been much exposed to death ever since his youth. His mother had died when he was seventeen, his best friend when he was twenty, the Père Lachaise had been the center of his solitary walks since boyhood. He kept returning to it. "So often have I died in pain," he notes in 1822, when he is twenty-four, that "I have made friends with death." Very close friends indeed.

With life and death closely interwoven, work could not cease when others died. The night of his mother's death, Michelet did his homework, prepared the next day's Latin prose. Waiting for Madame Dumesnil to die, his monstrous imagination would not let him repine: he rethought the later Middle Ages, coined more effective phrases for his lectures. The most painful experiences brought grist to his mill. Pauline died, yet "his heartbreak produced a violent, almost frenzied force: I plunged with somber joy into the Fifteenth Century death of France,

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connecting it with passions of grim sensuality that I discovered as much in myself as in my subject." Madame Dumesnil's death left him wounded, bereft, but realizing afresh that one obsession only never let him down: "His great mistress, History." Gabriel Monod saw very well that Michelet worked off his pain but also put it to use: "On one hand, a sort of wild fury that makes him take morbid pleasure in death and despair; on the other, the consoling thought that death holds the secret of life." Michelet could strike fire from every kind of stone.

Every man his own historian, every man his own psychologist. Michelet was acutely aware of relations between private experience and public expression, between bedding his maids (or trying to improve their minds) and his interest in the popular masses, his approach to history, to revolution, to education, his attacks on priests. He even exaggerates their interrelation, and analysts are tempted to do so too. The issue is how far one should go in that direction and what benefits one can draw from doing so.

There is little question, Michelet never doubted it, that personal experience illumined and affected his views of history. Like everyone else, but with self-conscious intensity, Michelet lived with constant internal conflicts: between flesh and spirit, discipline and desire, stoic and sensualist. He yearned for resolution, but his intellectual inventions brought no solution; at best they brought an awareness of creative tension. Michelet's intellectual career is littered with the fallout of his attempts (Love, Fraternity) to solve the insoluble problems that study, principle, and lived experience raised. He shed them as he went. In history as in life, no abstraction or generalization can encompass reality, nothing is forever, reality is passing, like greatness or decadence, endless *ricorsi*—ups and downs, though with an upward bent, where even death represents not a period but a semicolon.

More crucial to Michelet's intellectual evolution, Mitzman attributes Michelet's early attitude to freedom, history, and, above all, to nature, to "his disquiet about his own biological determinants" and his profound ambivalence about his mother. That is as may be. But it is possible to read Michelet's assertions of interminable war between man and nature, spirit and matter, and freedom and fatality at face value, and to regard his insistence that "history is nothing but this interminable struggle" as the running theme of his writings. The first page of his first notable work—the *Introduction to Universal History*, finished "on the burning flagstones" of July 1830—is headed "La Course à la Liberté," the race to freedom. History, as defined there, represents the successive victories of human liberty over the fatality of nature. Nature is deterministic; human freedom, human will, can nudge or manipulate or overcome it. Nature is brute matter; human spirit can mold it. The description of how that

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happens is called history. What matter our surmises about the hidden sources of such views, if the argument makes sense? And if the views fail to persuade, will their explanation help much?

Nature does not change, human nature changes, and humans alter nature. They model it over the centuries in terraces, channels, orchards, fields. Their triumphs are always concrete, often petty, as with the little vineyards inserted twixt rock and rock, or chestnut trees that spread their roots through flint and pebble to feed the folk that planted them. These are the triumphs of man over the fatality of nature, the way we turn geography into history.

Yet men reforge the fatality they defy and confute. As he looked about him, Michelet lamented the rising tide of "mechanism": "Reasoning machines, law machines, steam machines, everywhere the machine invades the human domain." Industrial workshops that appalled him represented "the rule of necessity, of fatality"; messianic leaders like Napoleon, "*c'est encore matérialité, fatalité*"; theories of race history, as developed by Guizot or Augustin Thierry, alarmed him, as did those who argued "against liberty" for the "necessary," inevitable progression of some idea. The Jesuits, but not only the Jesuits: Malthus, Kant, scholasticism, abstraction, administration, codification, hindered, hampered, handicapped the freedom of minds to think for themselves. Reality was not theories and trends but men and women, not irresistible tides of history but individuals—individual personalities swimming, if need be, against the tide. Michelet's last work, written in the wake of the Commune, denounced all the threats that massed against human freedom, the hosts of contemporary apocalypse ushered in by its three horsemen—socialism, militarism, industrialism—machines as dreadful as any the Jesuits represented, because they reinstituted fatality.

My version of Michelet's views and of his inspiration is, of course, as debatable as that of Arthur Mitzman. And Mitzman has sensible things to say, though he says them too often in jargon. But he has learned nothing from Michelet, whom he values highly. Michelet loved stories, digressions, illustrations, anything that brought his tale to life. Mitzman gives us copious quotations, which is good, but picks on Michelet's treacliest rhetoric, which is boring; and boredom is contagious. He refers to Michelet's sharp sense of political tactics, in his own life as in his writings, which sounds fascinating. But he provides no illustrations. His account of the historian "in personal and historical context," does not include more than the barest notice of the man's professional ascent, or of his relations with patrons and colleagues. We hear about the vote of censure that preceded his dismissal from the Collège de France in 1851, but why seventeen colleagues voted against him and only four for him is not explained. Political prejudice, political pressure, only? Or were more personal frictions at work?

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So it goes. Readers sympathetic to the psycho-historical approach will enjoy *Michelet, Historian.* Others will find little in English to excite them, until some inspired publisher translates Viallaneix. As Mitzman says, "His exalted nationalism and his carefree attitude to sources" have not helped Michelet's reputation with modern historians. Having grown up in a town where Jules Michelet was a street name, I always knew that he must be important. But I never read him until after World War II, when his stock rose with the growing vogue of social history. I took him up because Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch admired him, and I admired Febvre and Bloch. Their names will remind those who need reminding of Michelet's role as reference and tutelary hero for the *Annales*, and for the *Annales'* interest in total history: social, economic, private, public, though with a little blank where politics were concerned.

My feeling is that, whatever Febvre said—and one can say almost anything about the dead who are not there to answer back, especially when not many read them—Michelet's influence on twentieth-century history was less a matter of substance than of style. He never was that much of a historian; certainly not a historian's historian. But, read against the rather stilted background of early twentieth-century academic prose, his pages invigorate like a hot shower. Witness how well his best readers write: Péguy, Febvre, Viallaneix, Roland Barthes. Always in French, of course; seldom in English, which is the tongue of the treacherous enemy whom Michelet loathed more even than the Jesuits. So those who appreciate Michelet's music more than his lyrics don't need to read him now. His epigones will do, provided you know French.

Fair enough. Michelet is dead and buried; year after year it rains upon his grave in the Père Lachaise through which he liked to roam. His memory is as weather beaten as his monument there or his reputation, so he may not rest in fame. But he rests in history, that kingdom of the dead with whom he lived.

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An Indian View of T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*

PURASU BALAKRISHNAN

I

IT IS NATURAL FOR US IN INDIA to be interested in T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*. Eliot himself considered it to be one of his major poetical achievements. It has been called the greatest philosophical poem of this century. It is rooted in Christian faith and doctrine. It is alive with Christian imagery and symbols such as the Annunciation, Communion, Good Friday, the Temptation of Christ, the Fire, the Dove, the Rose, the Lotus. It is Eliot's final religious testament. It carries explicit references to *Bhagavad Gita*. It is appropriate that we, in India, give our attention to it.

The references to *Bhagavad Gita* occur in the third quartet, *The Dry Salvages (III)*. One occurs where Eliot prescribes a way out of the sorry predicament of man:

> And do not think of the fruit of action.
> Fare forward . . .
> So Krishna, as when he admonished Arjuna
> On field of battle.
>
> *The Dry Salvages III*

This admonition of Krishna is one of the key verses of *Bhagavad Gita*:

> Your business is only with action, at no time with its fruits. Then will you be free from the bonds of action. At the same time do not slip into inaction.*
>
> *Bhagavad Gita II 47*

✪ PURASU BALAKRISHNAN, pseudonym of Subrahmanya Balakrishnan, is formerly professor of pediatrics at Pondicherry University. He is the author of *The Gold Bangle and Other Stories*, *Glimpses of Kalidasa*, *Ramalinga: Poet and Prophet*, and *Kasi and Other Poems*.

* The translations from the Sanskrit and Tamil are by the author.

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The very word *business* is used by Eliot in a similar context earlier:

> But perhaps neither gain nor loss.
> For us there is only the trying. The rest is not our business.
> *East Coker V*

Preceding Eliot's reference to the famous admonition of Krishna, there is another reference to *Bhagavad Gita*:

> At the moment which is not of action or inaction
> You can receive this: "On whatever sphere of being
> The mind of man may be intent
> At the time of death"—that is the one action
> (And the time of death is every moment)
> Which shall fructify in the lives of others.
> *The Dry Salvages III*

Bhagavad Gita has the following:

> Whatever a man, at the time of his death, thinks of, to that he attains in his next birth, the nature of the thought being incorporated into his nature.
> *Bhagavad Gita VIII 6*

There is one more reference to *Bhagavad Gita* at the beginning of the third section of *The Dry Salvages*:

> I sometimes wonder if that was what Krishna meant.

In its context it is not clear to me which saying of Krishna Eliot here alludes to.

II

Eliot starts, in *Burnt Norton*, the first quartet, with man's perception of brief moments of timelessness in time, what he calls later in *The Dry Salvages* "the point of intersection of the timeless with time." These moments give him a glimpse of "the still point of the turning world" *(Burnt Norton II)*. But these glimpses are intermittent, few and far between, followed by disillusionment on return to the workaday world. An attempt is made to recover the transcendent moment in continuity, as far as one may. Means of recovering them are contemplated in *The Dry Salvages*, with reflections on time and timelessness, the movement and meaning of time, the use of memory and history, with language and

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music as analogues. The attempts end in a resignation to right action *(The Dry Salvages III* and *V)* and a prayer to the Virgin for intercession *(The Dry Salvages IV)* with motive purified "in the ground of our beseeching" *(Little Gidding III)* and to love purged of desire until "the fire and the rose are one" *(Little Gidding V).*

I shall now go into the poem in some detail in four parts: "The Moment," "The Interim," "The Attempt," and "The Goal."

The moment, with which the first quartet, *Burnt Norton,* starts, and which it expounds as far as mystic experiences may be expounded, is one of transcendent awareness. It is an ecstatic illumination, an intimation of a different sphere of being, and it is fleeting. Eliot describes it variously as "the moment in the rose-garden," "the still point of the turning world" *(Burnt Norton II),* "echoed ecstasy / Not lost, but requiring, pointing to the agony / Of death and birth" *(East Coker III),* "the moment of happiness," "the sudden illumination," "the point of intersection of the timeless with time," "the unattended / Moment, the moment in and out of time, / The distraction fit, lost in a shaft of sunlight" *(The Dry Salvages II* and *V),* and "the timeless moment" *(Little Gidding V).* Combining two words of Eliot that he uses in different contexts, one may call it also "the still moment."

The content of the moment, being mystic, can be described only in symbols. As Eliot has it in *Burnt Norton I,* it is reached by "the passage which we did not take / Towards the door we never opened / Into the rose-garden." And there,

> Dry the pool, dry concrete, brown edged,
> And the pool was filled with water out of sunlight
> And the lotus rose, quietly, quietly,
> The surface glittered out of heart of light.
>
> *Burnt Norton I*

Here I must mention a striking parallel to this picture in Rabindranath Tagore's *Gitanjali*:

> I have tasted of the hidden honey of this lotus that expands in the ocean of light, and thus am I blessed—let this be my parting word.
>
> *Gitanjali 96*

Like all mystics who can only affirm their experience, Eliot says:

> I can only say, *there* we have been: but I cannot say where.
> And I cannot say, how long, for that is to place it in time.
>
> *Burnt Norton II*

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We have been to the *there* of Eliot. We shall now come to the *here*, the interim to which we come back from the *there*, the *here* of "the turning world." Eliot pictures it thus:

> Here is a place of disaffection
> Time before and after
> In the dim light:
> . . . Only a flicker
> Over the strained time-ridden faces
> . . . empty of meaning.
> *Burnt Norton III*

With the loss of the timeless vision, the interim looks like a stretch of "waste sad time / Stretching before and after" *(Burnt Norton V)*. Just as the transcendent moment is symbolized by the rose garden where in a pool of light blooms the lotus, the symbol of purity and affection, the interim is symbolized by the dark path:

> In the middle, not only in the middle of the way
> But all the way, in a dark wood, in a bramble,
> On the edge of a grimpen, where is no secure foothold,
> And menaced by monsters.
> *East Coker II*

This reminds one of the dark wood that Dante finds himself in, and the lion and the wolf in his path, in the beginning of *The Divine Comedy*.

Eliot likens the interim between the timeless moments to the dark interval in the theater between the changing of scenes, the stops of an underground train between two stations, and to the mind, conscious but conscious of nothing, under ether *(East Coker III)*. Rabindranath Tagore, in his *Gitanjali*, describes such an interim thus:

> The child cries out when from the right breast
> the mother takes it away, in the very next
> moment to find in the left one its consolation.
> *Gitanjali 95*

The feeling comes to Eliot:

> We had the experience but missed the meaning.
> *The Dry Salvages II*

An attempt follows to recover, in his words, "the past experience revived in the meaning" *(The Dry Salvages II)* and to hold onto the

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vision during the whole life span:

> to apprehend
> The point of intersection of the timeless
> With time
> *The Dry Salvages V*

> Not the intense moment
> Isolated, with no before and after
> But a lifetime burning in every moment
> And not the lifetime of one man only
> But of old stones that cannot be deciphered.
> *East Coker IV*

This is far from easy, this is a far cry from man's preoccupations in this world. Eliot grimly says that man is content

> To communicate with Mars, converse with spirits
> To report the behaviour of the sea monster,
> Describe the horoscope, haruspicate or scry,
> Observe disease in signatures, evoke
> Biography from the wrinkles of the palm
> And tragedy from fingers, release omens
> By sortilege, or tea leaves, riddle the inevitable
> With playing cards, fiddle with pentagrams
> Or barbituric acids, or dissect
> The recurrent image into preconscious terrors—
> To explore the womb or tomb or dreams . . .
> Men's curiosity searches past and future
> And clings to that dimension. But to apprehend
> The point of intersection of the timeless
> With time is an occupation for the saint.
> *The Dry Salvages V*

This is an Olympian pronouncement of a man in search of the still moment, a man in the modern environment and, by and large, limited by it.

As Eliot directs us to a saint, I may place alongside this pronouncement of his a similar Olympian pronouncement by a saint, made on a different plane, and of a different dimension from those of Eliot. The saint is Thayumanavar who lived in Tamil Nadu, India, in the seventeenth century A.D.:

> Easy it is to break the horse and ruttish elephant
> To muzzle the bear and the tiger
> Ride a lion

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Rattle a venomed snake
Alchemize metals into gold
Don invisibility
Charge the gods to do errands
Stay in perennial youth
Migrate into another body
Walk on water, sit on fire
Work miracles—
But hard, how hard it is
To keep the mind
Seated in the stillness of Being.
Tejomayanandam 8

Thayumanavar makes a reference to his environment, as Eliot does to his, and indicates directly that the goal of the quest, which is the same for both, is to be achieved by making the mind still, void of thoughts, void of the ego that is the parent of thoughts, that (as *Vedanta* teaches us) itself dissolves when emptied of thoughts, being only a phantom created by thoughts, a phantom raised by the root-thought "I." Filled with thoughts, Eliot flaps his luminous wings in vain. To the end of the last quartet, *Little Gidding*, he keeps up his exploration:

We will not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And to know the place for the first time.
Little Gidding V

And the concluding lines end with no more than a hope:

And all shall be well and
All manner of things shall be well
When the tongues of flame are in-folded
Into the crowned knot of fire
And the fire and the rose are one.
Little Gidding V

While the mystic experience is present in Eliot, he goes off tangentially from the still point, in an elaborate preparation to arrive at the point, but all (in *Vedantic* concept) directed away from it, all working, as they do, in a plane different from that of the still point, moving towards considerations of time, its movement, its usefulness, time in and out of time, timelessness, the interlinking of the past, present, and future, the voyager not being the one who saw the harbor receding or the one who will disembark, the use of memory, the use of history, the support from the analogy with language and music, the difficulty of artistic expression,

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the necessity of pattern to reach the silence, and such other matters. All these represent the preparation of the person for the goal, his preparation to equip himself to arrive, and try to remain, at the still point—the preparatory pluming and flapping of the wings for the flight. The straight *Vedantic* flight to the still point is not there. When I read the commentators and explicators of Eliot talking of the failure of history, and this failure becoming Eliot's "personal failure or defeat," "inevitable in the temporality of words," the necessity of shared values between the past and the present to reach the timeless point, I feel that all these are neither here nor there. All these partake of an intellectual exercise.

Let me explain. Eliot considers history as furnishing an occasion in which to reconcile oneself to mortality in the shared values of humanity. But the reconciliation is only the despairing second resort of one who fails to find "timelessness." Timelessness, in *Upanishadic* concept, interpenetrates and envelops time, and does not just randomly "intersect" it. Reconciliation, attained through historical or artistic perception, is within time, whereas timelessness is beyond time. The inspiration, through the realization of a common identity that a person with a totally different background and belonging to a totally different time and milieu may derive from responding to artistic or historical expressions of long ago, are, measured against the *Upanishadic* concept, only illusion or illusory solace that companionship provides, akin to the solace that people, huddled together on a melting iceberg, may feel. To subscribe completely, to the exclusion of a further dimension, to artistic or historical experience or dimension, is to lose sight of the far-off goal of true timelessness.

It would appear that Eliot, in trying to come to terms with the flight of the brief timeless moment, and with the meaningless stretch of the "time-ridden" rest of life before and after, and in trying to apprehend and stay in the timeless moment, handles weapons that are not of the same element as the moment of awareness, and can only cleave the air of the intellect. The attack, if I may use such a word, must be a direct one on the timeless moment itself. It must not be sidetracked, unless the track leads back to the main route, to parallel ideas like time in time, time out of time, unity of time, timeless moments in history, because these are all bounded by time, and there is also the risk that one may get lost in these. If these do not lead one back to *face* the question of timelessness per se, these will be no more than a blind alley.

Eliot himself writes, "You are the music while the music lasts" *(The Dry Salvages V)*. By the same token, in the still moment, man himself is that timeless still moment—say, the Eternal or the Divine if some will have it so, or God if some others will have it so. The way to pursue the quest, for reasons mentioned earlier, will be to study the intrinsic nature

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of the moment itself, the moment per se, and also man as the moment by implication, and try to understand the two in terms of each other. The conclusion, if any be possible at all, will naturally be a function of the inquiring individual, and may or may not be the truth. But one may presume that, ultimately, after considerations along parallel paths have shown what timelessness is not, the quest is to be pursued in this direction.

The root of the matter is Eliot's essential ambivalence—his mixing up time with the spirit or the soul. The mystic experience is defined and worked out by Eliot in terms of time and not in terms of the spirit or the soul. One wonders why, because Eliot does not fight shy of using the words *soul* and *God*. Krishna, in *Bhagavad Gita*, says, "I am Time" *(Bhagavad Gita XI 32)*. Here I might also observe that Dante, whose influence we see clearly in *Four Quartets*, says when he comes to Paradise *(Paradiso, Canto 31)* that he had come "from time unto eternity itself" (in Lawrence Grant White's translation). Conversely, in the timeless or eternal moment one may feel the presence of divinity. Indeed the experience of this moment leads Eliot in *The Dry Salvages V* on the spiritual path of "selflessness and self-surrender" and "prayer, observance and discipline" so that he comes to understand, "by hints and guesses" the "gift" that "is Incarnation." He also realizes the teaching of *Bhagavad Gita* that right action gives freedom. But even in this freedom, we may note, such is his preoccupation with time, he underscores that "right action is freedom / From past and future also" *(The Dry Salvages V)*. Finally he takes the plunge into the "refining fire" where "the fire and the rose are one" *(Little Gidding V)*.

I may place beside this quotation two verses from Saint Thayumanavar that say the same in terms of natural phenomena:

> When shall I, like the flaming iron in the fire,
> Turn one with the Flame of Bliss?
> When shall I, like lighted camphor
> Burning ashless,
> Merge into the Supreme Light?
>
> *En-nat-kanni XIV 7* and *8*

This quest might have been an exploration of the experience of God per se if the qualification "God in time" had not been there, and if God had been identified completely with time, as in Krishna's statement in *Bhagavad Gita*. Instinctively inclining to the tendency of his choice, Eliot does not do that. He has the wisdom of knowing how far his—or, in general, man's—intellect (or *buddhi*, as the word is in Sanskrit) can go. In spite of his mystic intimation, he cannot give up his dominating, probing intellect, and he himself relegates the quest to the saint.

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The *Upanishads* place *buddhi*, or intellect, along with the mind, the ego, and the senses under the *atman* or the individual soul, which is connoted to be of a different nature from them. The *Kathopanishad* says:

> Know the self as the lord of the chariot, the body as the chariot, the intellect as the charioteer, and the mind as the rein.
>
> *Kathopanishad I iii 3*

The teaching of the *Upanishads*, based on this premise, is:

> The self is not attainable to the intellect or to deep study (of scriptures) or listening to (spiritual) discourses. It is attained only by him whom it chooses as apt. To him his own self reveals itself.
>
> *Mundakopanishad III ii 3*

This, according to *Upanishadic* philosophy, is the secret of the timeless moment. But this realization is not to be attained without effort. The next verse makes it clear:

> The self is not attainable to one devoid of (spiritual) strength or purpose or even by austerities done without form. The self of him who wisely employs all these means enters the state of *Brahman* (the Self or the supreme Absolute).
>
> *Mundakopanishad III ii 4*

I have come to the point of departure along the Indian road, so that I shall extend Eliot's Timeless Reality to God and to a still further extension to *Brahman*. I believe there will be no objection to this if I give the *Vedantic* clarification that *Brahman* is Formless God, the divine core or essence in all things in the universe, from the biggest to the smallest. If the idea of God is admitted into the argument, I believe there will be no objection to bringing in the essence of God or Divinity in things, to which the name of *Brahman* is given in Sanskrit. A *Vedantin*, or more specifically an *Advaitin* (a student of the *Vedas* or the *Upanishads)* will recognize that it is the momentary contact with *Brahman* or the Absolute that imprints Eliot's moment with timelessness. This contact or repose in the Infinite gives one an escape from the transitory to the eternal, from ego-life to liberated life—to a mooring to the divine in the thick of life.

III

Eliot explores the timeless moment through its meaning and significance in order to extend the meaning and the experience to the whole of life:

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. . . the past experience revived in the meaning
Is not the experience of one life only
But of many generations.
The Dry Salvages II

The conditioning of his quest by time is such that he needs shared values with the past, and this to such an extent that he declares:

. . . A people without history
Is not redeemed from time, for history is a pattern
Of timeless moments.
Little Gidding V

His conquest is achieved in time:

Only through time time is conquered
Burnt Norton II

The last statement, according to the *Upanishads*, is not fundamentally true. It is true to the extent that only in time do we achieve any goal of ours. But we conquer time through the achieved goal, of which we become a part, transcending time. Time is only the secondary means. According to *Vedanta* or *Upanishadic* philosophy, Soul or *Brahman* is the primary means as well as the goal. Sankara says that liberation is not dependent on time. (See *infra.*) This may look like hairsplitting, but we are concerned here with where the emphasis is laid, whether on time or the soul. According to *Vedanta*, the *atman* or the individual soul conquers time by its own nature, not through time. Even here, the *atman* of the realized person, according to *Vedanta*, has no sense of doing itself.

Again, in *Little Gidding*, where we have the height of the argument, namely the resolution, Eliot elaborates on the civil wars of the seventeenth century whose protagonists, in his words, are now reduced to

Accept the constitution of silence
And are folded in a single party.
Little Gidding III

Explaining the lesson of history in terms of Eliot's reading of time and timelessness, Nancy K. Gish, in her book *Time in the Poetry of T. S. Eliot*, says: "History is both meaningful and comprehensible because it has bequeathed to us 'a symbol perfected in death' whose meaning is defined in the changed relationship of these historical figures." Professor Gish adds:

The pattern of history resembles the pattern of words or music which recall the stillness, but the pattern is within all history; it is not a rare and transitory

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achievement in the midst of chaos. Thus the past has a profound significance despite the inevitable change, because we can share with the past ages a commitment to timeless truth. Death ceases to matter; rather it perfects a symbol, for whether our immediate life be well or ill, all is ultimately well.

All these would appear to be flappings of intellectual wings. One need not have recourse to history to discover that death does not matter, or try to discover in history, to speed one on one's spiritual pilgrimage, what Eliot describes as "a symbol perfected in death" *(Little Gidding III).*

It is to be noted that Eliot's conditioning by time is such that even in the " . . . expanding / Of love beyond desire" *(Little Gidding III)* he seeks "liberation / From the future as well as the past" *(Little Gidding III).* Here I shall have recourse to Sri Ramana Maharshi, the *Advaitin* par excellence of modern times who, with one swift masterstroke of the spirit demolishes preoccupation with time past and time future. He says:

> Since the past and the future have never been without the present, to know the eternal Now is to know the Truth.
>
> *Thus Spake Ramana* 22

The *Vedantic* approach does this exploration, not in terms of time, but in terms of the self or the soul. It recognizes the content of the timeless moment as well as the knower of that moment to be of the same nature, namely *Brahman,* the Universal Soul or the Supreme Absolute. It is aware that the timeless moment results when the *atman* or the individual soul abides in *Brahman,* the Universal Soul. The *Vedantic* equation between the two is the famous *Tat tvam asi* (You are That):

> That is the subtle essence which the whole world has for its soul. That is the Self. And you, Svetaketu, are That.
>
> *Chhandogya Upanishad VI viii 7*

Vedanta not only endorses the possibility of extending this momentary timeless experience to the whole of life but declares that here and now this is attained by those few who are called *jivanmuktas* or *avadhutas* (persons liberated-in-life). These, by passing beyond phenomenal life, that is life oriented to forms and names, although existing in it, are said to have attained a spiritual state equivalent to the *Vedantic* That which stands for *Brahman.* These liberated ones abide in their own *atman,* the still center of Being, void of agitations arising from thoughts, attachments, and bonds. According to *Vedanta,* the emptying of the mind, which is the same as the dissolution of the ego, provides a straight

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flight to the still center of Being, or *Sat*, as it is called in Sanskrit, where time is no more. These liberated ones are also called *yogis*, or persons united with God. (The word *yogi* is derived from the root *yuj*, which means "join" or "unite.")

The sage Patanjali describes *yoga*, or union with God, pithily:

> *Yoga* is suppression of the mind.
> This suppression is attained by non-attachment and discipline.
> Then the seer abides in himself.
>
> *Yoga Sutra I–2, 12,* and *3*

Here it is to be noted that abiding in one's self is in fact to be abiding in the Supreme or Universal Self.

The state of the *yogi* is described in *Bhagavad Gita* as follows:

> Steady like a flame in a windless place is the quelled mind of the *yogi* who is centred in the contemplation of his self.
>
> *Bhagavad Gita VI 19*

Kalidasa, in his *Kumarasambhava*, carries over not only the figure of the flame but also the inward contemplation of the self to God Siva Himself as He is established in penance (for Siva is God with form unlike *Brahman* who is formless):

> Steady like a splendid flame in a windless place
> . . . . . .
> Looking within His Self at the Self
> Whom knowers of *Brahman* know.
>
> *Kumarasambhava III 48* and *50*

There is, in *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, an illustrative teaching that illumines in a flash the *Vedantin*'s orientation to the spirit, in contrast to Eliot's orientation to time, in the quest of the timeless or eternal.

Flowing on the stream of time, as all of us do, Eliot sees on the one hand—say, on one bank of the stream—the timeless moments, brief and recurrent. His significant phrase for the world on this bank is "there." ("I can only say there we have been," *Burnt Norton II.*) When the vision fails, he is thrown back on the stream of temporal life. His significant phrase for this world is "here" ("Here is a place of disaffection / Time before and time after," *Burnt Norton III).* He likens his waiting for the vision "without hope" to a third state: "When, under ether, the mind is conscious but conscious of nothing" *(East Coker III).* The state of "there" being on one bank, the state of "here" (the usual waking state)

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being the stream of time, we may posit the third or "ether" state on the second bank.

Now let us consider Yajnavalkya, the great *Vedantic-Advaitic* sage of *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.* He tells King Janaka:

> As a large fish in a river swims now towards one bank and now towards the other bank, the *atman* (soul) moves now to the waking state, and now to the dreaming state.
>
> *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV 3–4/13*

In this pictorial exposition of Yajnavalkya we see that the *atman*, or soul, symbolized by the fish, is swimming in its own element, the *Brahman*, turning now to one bank that is the wakeful state in the temporal world, and now to the other bank that is the dreaming state. This last, the dreaming state, reminds us of the ether state of Eliot. (In Yajnavalkya's analogy, the sleeping state [or sleep-consciousness] does not get representation in a bank since, as Yajnavalkya has explained earlier to Janaka, sleep is only an intermediate state between the natural state of the soul and the earthly waking state. Further, the dream-state, which finds representation in a bank, gives the *atman* a view of both the waking and the sleep states.)

Thus we see that while Eliot has his moorings in this, our world of time and temporality, Yajnavalkya has his moorings in the world of *atman* and *Brahman*. Eliot's parameter of reference (the central stream) in regard to the states is the temporal state, Yajnavalkya's is the *Brahman* state. The latter orientation, according to the *Upanishads*, is more conducive to the capture of the timeless moment and to establishing oneself there. It is an axiom made by the *Upanishads*, and made the basis of meditation, that man becomes that of which he thinks, that man becomes that with which he identifies himself. To have started with identification is to have planted oneself already on the path. Indeed the identification of oneself with *atman/Brahman*, and the dissociating oneself from the ego, which is a function of the mind, are the be-all and end-all of the quest of the *Vedantin*; and one may equate the quest of the timeless moment to that of the divine state. The picture of the fish and the river shows that even at the start, Yajnavalkya has identified himself with the goal of his quest. Here again, one doubting the validity of the goal may question even the need of reaching the goal and say that to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive and the true success is to labor. However, it would seem that Eliot does try to reach the goal of timelessness, and that desperately, and that his pursuit leaves him on the threshold of intimations.

That the process of the quest itself transcends time is attested by Sankara, the great *Advaitin* of India:

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Liberation, being not dependent on space, time or causation, cannot be likened to the fruit of action.

Brahmasutra Bhashya IV 1, 13

It is to be noted also that, according to the *Upanishads*, the world of the spirit interpenetrates the world of time and space, unlike the heaven of popular religions. This interpenetration is also different from the simple intersection of time past and time present (according to Eliot's transcendent historical concept) and to his "point(s) of intersection of the timeless with time."

In a discourse between Sage Yajnavalkya and King Janaka, as the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* has it, King Janaka asks:

Yajnavalkya, when the sun has set, and the moon has set, and the fire gone out, what light constitutes this person (the individual soul)?

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV 3–4/5

Yajnavalkya replies:

Speech is indeed his light.

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV 3–4/5

Eliot says similarly:

Only by the form, the pattern,
Can words or music reach
The stillness.

Burnt Norton V

Eliot's resolution of the theme is

expanding
Of love beyond desire, and so liberation
From the future as well as the past.

Little Gidding III

Here again we see the persistent shadow of time falling on Eliot. Whatsoever that may be, Eliot's exploration of the timeless moment ends with the silence following music and speech:

. . . Words, after speech, reach
Into the silence.

Burnt Norton V

Janaka's inquiry of Yajnavalkya goes beyond this silence. He asks:

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Yajnavalkya, when the sun has set, and the moon has set, and the fire gone out, and speech hushed, what light constitutes this person?

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV 3–4/6

And Yajnavalkya replies:

The Self is indeed his light.

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV 3–4/6

Janaka goes further:

Who is this Self?

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV 3–4/7

To this Yajnavalkya replies:

He is the person (soul) who is seated as knowledge amidst the senses, he who is the light within. Retaining his nature, he wanders in the two worlds, apparently involved in activity.

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV 3–4/7

In the light of these two further steps of Janaka and Yajnavalkya, let us consider the final resolution of the quest by Eliot and Dante.

Eliot's final testament, as well as Dante's, culminates in the expanding of desire to love, and the merging of the rose in the fire, the purgation of Love in the Fire of God. We are left to our own wisdom to decide what is meant by this love and how to effect its purgation. Maybe this is the right thing to do, maybe a Socratic philosopher may be content just to act the gadfly, stinging a man to the truth. However, stinging is a guidance to some extent, and some may meaningfully prolong it a little further, and this may be helpful. Witness Yajnavalkya's systematizing or orienting human relationships and desires towards living in *Brahman* in daily life and attaining spiritual realization through love so that life itself becomes a process of soul-making (as Keats would call it) on earth. Yajnavalkya tells his wife, Maitreyi:

Verily, not for the love of the husband is the husband dear
But for the love of the Self is the husband dear

Verily, not for the love of the wife is the wife dear
But for the love of the Self is the wife dear

Verily, not for the love of the son is the son dear
But for the love of the Self is the son dear

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Verily, not for the love of wealth is the wealth dear
But for the love of the Self is the wealth dear

Verily, not for the love of the worlds are the worlds dear
But for the love of the Self are the worlds dear

Verily, not for the love of the gods are the gods dear
But for the love of the Self are the gods dear

Verily, not for the love of creatures are the creatures dear
But for the love of the Self are the creatures dear

Verily, everything is dear, not for the love of those things
But for the love of the Self is everything dear

Verily, it is the Self which we have to see, hear,
perceive and know in everything. When we have done this,
O Maitreyi, we need do no more.

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad II 4/6–9 and *12–16*

The *Avadhuta Gita* of Sage Dattatreya is devoted entirely to the delineation of those who are liberated or realized during their earthly life. Being an *avadhuta* or realized person himself, he declares:

I am always performing the supreme action which is nonaction. Devoid of attachment and detachment, I revel in supreme joy. Devoid of body and bodilessness, like the sky, I am drunk with knowledge.

Avadhuta Gita III 26

The *Ashtavakra Gita* of Sage Ashtavakra also gives a picture of the *jivan-mukta* or the liberated-in-life:

To the liberated-in-life there is no duty to perform, nothing to seek. His actions follow naturally his lot in life.

Ashtavakra Gita XVIII 13

These two works are, in short, elaborations of the "actionless action" taught in *Bhagavad Gita*:

He who sees inaction in action, and action in inaction, he is a *yogi* (one in union with God), performing actions, yet unsullied by them.

Bhagavad Gita IV 18

It seems to me that T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets* expresses an intellectual's reaction to certain mystic intimations. This visitation of intimations is in accord with the enunciation of *Mundaka Upanishad,* quoted earlier,

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that "to him, whom it chooses as apt, his own self reveals itself." To those who are familiar with the *Upanishads*, his *Four Quartets* appear as a parallel approach to *Upanishadic* philosophy in the sense that, though spiritual, the exploration is confined within temporality, beating against the bars of time, while *Upanishadic* philosophy transcends time and, in Heinrich Zimmer's phrase, is a "world-reverberating jungle roar" of the spirit.

The Album

FLOYD SKLOOT

This was the young man she should have married,
taller than my father and a full head
of hair. I can see how well he carried
himself, can't I? Poised and at ease instead
of coiled for flight. She knows who I get that

from! Or this, a friend of Jackson Pollock,
who could appreciate her as they sat
through long summery evenings of Dvořák.
They rowed on Schroon Lake and sipped lemon tea.

Or this son of money, so loyal to
his aging mother. He would come to see
her, never dream of living as I do
a continent away from the woman
who bore him. Even today she can see
how he greeted his mother, arms laden
with small gifts, happy as a man could be.

All those wonderful boys to choose among
and she chose my father with his flat nose,
his bent ears and one glass eye. Neither young
nor versed in the fine arts. Do I suppose
it was just passion? Any one of those
men! Then she smiles and says, simply, God knows.

✪ FLOYD SKLOOT's poems have appeared in *Harper's*, the *New Criterion*, *Shenandoah*, and many other journals.

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Mother and Marmee

ANN STRUTHERS

When Abigail Alcott died, Louisa May and her father
prepared to publish her journals—
she of the gray cloak and unfashionable bonnet
worn like her principles, the first
paid social worker in America
who reported to the rich benefactoresses
that she found the Irish immigrants dirty,
ragged, hungry, that her investigation
of causes showed that they were not stupid,
drunken, shiftless. "Your husbands
don't pay their workers
a living wage!"

In *Little Women* Louisa May had given her
a fictive servant, an absent husband
fighting in the Union Army
because the real husband
indulged in utopian schemes
for eating, farming, education,
spent money wildly when he had it;
bought fine ivory paper, thick as clotted cream,
heavy enough to bear the weight of his philosophy;
didn't pay his bills. Could tell from the sound
of the knock which angry creditor was pounding.

Louisa, builder of pastel worlds
where everyone was more or less good,
found in her mother's journals
anger black as ink, resentment bone white,
and bitterness underlined and blotted.
She and Bronson built a fire
in the grate and watched the pages curl
into black roses, heard rage roar up the chimney.

✪ ANN STRUTHERS is a visiting associate professor at Coe College. Her poems have appeared in the *Seattle*, *Iowa*, and *North American* reviews. She is the author of *Stoneboat*, a book of poems.

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Album of a Theater Critic

STANLEY KAUFFMANN

I

One of the jobs I have had in my life was the post of theater critic of *The New York Times*, where I was for eight months in 1966. It seems now like merely one of the jobs. When I went there, it seemed final.

Remembrance begins with the vague figure of a man on a leathery sofa, offering me the position. When I accepted, he welcomed me to *The Times* for the rest of my life. It was only the second time, after my marriage twenty-three years before, that anyone had welcomed me to anything for life. As against the day of the marriage, I had a sense of emplacement, not of beginning.

After those words from the leathery sofa, I walked out into Times Square. It was early on a winter evening. I had always felt excited when I was hired for anything, even as a boy when I was hired as a farm hand. I felt it now, but hovering above my excitement was the immense neon face of Broadway, blinking and grinning like a sly idiot. I was here because of the theater. All through my life, the theater had been woven in, and now I was charged to see what of the theater was hidden behind the whiskey and cigarette signs. It was a wry prospect. The signs were winking smugly.

The first two requirements of my job, before I actually began, were to have my picture taken and my body examined. I went to the *Times* portrait studio, where the photographer had me sit just so and turn my head just so and lower my head just so, to make my picture come out looking as much as possible like every other picture he had taken. Then, for the company's insurance plan, I had to be examined. There was an infirmary on an upper floor of the building. I took the vision test and the hearing test, after which the doctor led me to an examining table and said, "Will you please lay down?" I almost laughed. The *Times* doctor! It was the sort of grammatical mistake the *Daily News* doctor should have made.

When my appointment was announced, a week or so before I started, uproar broke out. I had been the film critic of *The New Republic* and the theater critic for the PBS television station in New York, and moving to *The Times*, I meant simply to continue in critical practice whatever I had been able to do in those places. I wasn't naive about the new job's increased visibility and influence, but I had no image of setting forth bravely to take lofty critical principles into the vulgar newspaper world. Yet this was the assumption, pro and con, of much that was published about the matter. People telephoned to interview me and asked me to comment on my reputation as being anti-Broadway. When I answered that I wasn't anti anything, I was pro theater, the sniffs and grunts I heard suggested that the other person thought I was being more nimble than forthright. Some, a few, put me in shining armor before I wrote a line for *The Times*. This, meant as compliment, made me feel awkward.

I wished that my supporters, as well as the others, could have seen where I was living when I reported for work. It was a small, dingy hotel room. On the day I began, early in January 1966, a subway strike also began. Taxis were as rare as rubies in the streets. Laura and I lived in Brooklyn Heights, and to make sure that I would be where I was

✪ STANLEY KAUFFMANN, film critic for *The New Republic*, has contributed six previous Albums to THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, three of which are included in *Albums of Early Life*.

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needed on time, we moved, for the duration of the strike, to the drab hotel a few doors down from the newspaper's offices. We brought some clothes and a few books, and we spent the first ten days of this much-mooted job in a depressing room heavy with the scent of cheap dates and salesmen's desperation.

I thought this was funny. The comedy persisted, behind the fuss about my moral mission. The first opening night I went to, I forgot to bring my tickets. I had wanted to slip into the theater as quietly as possible. Now I had to go to the box office and identify myself. The box-office woman filled out two vouchers for me, her face a mask of incredulity and scorn. I knew the glib psychological explanation of why I had forgotten the tickets. So, I thought, did she.

Inside the theater, a number of people craned their necks to look at me, but only one person spoke to me, the critic of an evening newspaper. A tall, beefy man, he came over to my seat, extended his hand, and said, "Welcome to the legion of the damned." I thanked him with the laugh he wanted, but I thought, "I'm fifty years old." His remark was part of my private comedy. I had come all this way, trying to learn and to practice some things, only to be greeted by a barroom joke.

II

At *The Times* I had a cubicle against the wall of a huge room filled with desks, I had a secretary just outside, I had a key to the back door of the building on 44th Street so that on opening nights I wouldn't have to take time to go around to the front door on 43rd Street if the back were more convenient, I had a credit card.

I disliked the office. Not the people but the idea of newspapers. Clatter and deadlines and hats on the backs of heads, all the movie mystique about newspapers, never held a jot of romance for me. I was there as a critic, I told myself, who happened to be on a newspaper, not as a newspaperman. I even hated the coarse gray copy paper that we typed on and that by nightfall covered the floor. I suppose that now, in word-processor days, there is no such paper drizzle, but it was everywhere then. It seemed to seep up through the floor, like dankness.

I was a technological pioneer. When I was hired, I had asked for an electric typewriter, the kind that I used at home, so that it would be familiar to me. The machine was purchased promptly, the first electric typewriter in the building outside of the executive offices. My secretary, who had worked for some of the theater critics before me, was impressed by the machine. She wanted to help. Just before she left the office at five o'clock on the day I was to do my first review, she switched on the typewriter to save me time when I got there after the play. When I arrived about nine that evening, the typewriter was hot. But it seemed the warmth of concern, hers, so I enjoyed it.

I swam through the review. I took long, easy strokes, breathing carefully. I had objected to opening-night reviews. I had argued with my editor that it was silly to give only an hour's consideration to a production that might have been years in the making. I wanted to attend the final previews of plays so that I would have a full day in which to write. The editor had agreed and tried to help my campaign, but most producers objected. Opening-night performances were supposed to be "high." Seven times, in my months on the paper, I was invited to a final preview by a producer on condition that I also attend the opening night so that I would benefit by the supposedly superior performance and would weigh it in. It never was superior. Once it was markedly worse. But this night, my first *Times* review, was a straight old-fashioned newspaper job. I saw the play, rushed to the office, wrote. I differed from other critics, I knew, because I did a first draft. Then I re-typed it, revising as I went. I kept this method a secret. But I never had any doubt about being able to write a review in sixty minutes or so. Quite the opposite. My worry was that it would be easy for me, and would get easier.

Lately the writing of reviews based on previews has become common.

In those days of Linotype machines, I had to type one or at most two paragraphs on a sheet of that copy paper, complete, without a run-on sentence to the next page. This was to help the Linotype operator and to save time. Sheet after sheet. Outside my cubicle waited a copy boy. He took each sheet upstairs to the composing room while I kept typing. I tried to sound calm and experienced as I called "Copy!" and the boy jumped. It was part of the performance.

When the review was finished, I had a sip of

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Irish whiskey from a bottle in my desk. Laura, sitting in the cubicle with me, had a sip, too. Then I got into a tiny two-person elevator and went up to the composing room. The first paragraphs had already been set, and the proof strips were hanging on hooks outside the composing room. I read the strips and corrected them. By the time I finished them, the last strips were ready.

I went downstairs and met Laura, and we walked down the street to our dingy hotel room. I felt as if I had been connecting a series of dots all evening, moving from point to point to fulfill a pattern. I told Laura. She said, "I hope I'm going to like all this." I wondered what my friends and my detractors would think of my review. She said, "Probably all of them will think they were right."

Variations occurred during the eight months that followed. Sometimes we went for a meal nearby after I read the proofs. The restaurant would be fairly empty. No performances were yet finished except the opening night I had attended, which began early. We would sit in the quiet restaurant, feeling, for no real reason, victorious. Afterward the first edition of the paper would be off press, and we would take a copy home to Brooklyn with us. If there were any errors in my piece, I would phone in corrections from home. It was one of the few attributes of power I enjoyed, being able to sit home and make changes in *The Times*.

I never understood why there weren't more errors in the paper. One evening about nine-thirty, after I had finished a review, the head of the so-called Culture Department stopped in the doorway of my cubicle to chat. He was standing on some sheets of the copy paper that coated the floor by that hour, and as we talked, his eye wandered down to a sheet under his shoe. He interrupted himself, picked up the sheet, and muttered, "What the hell is this? This was supposed to be in the first edition."

Another power I liked was telephoning in my reviews from far places. I visited resident theaters in other cities, and in the summer I went to theater festivals, and in both cases I had to dictate my reviews over the phone. I had been given a special number to call at the *Times* office. It was always answered by the most bored voice I have ever heard. Slowly, distinctly, I would dictate what I had just written, at the moment the most important words in the world to me, and the voice would say, "Yeah? That all? More? Yeah?" I enjoyed the counterpoint between him and me.

On one of those trips I got a sharp reminder of my power. In Chicago I had agreed to attend a Wednesday matinee of a new theater group if they would drive me to another place by six o'clock. They agreed, and after the performance I got into a car driven by their publicity person, a young woman fresh out of college in her first job. She was eager to do this chore as professionally as possible, and we started off promptly.

What she and the others in her theater had forgotten was that this was rush hour. The road along the lake was jammed with crawling cars, and we were jammed in the middle, crawling with them. My driver knew about my urgency, knew that it was her mission to get this sovereign figure, myself, to his next appointment on time. She began to shake, to beat on the wheel with her fists, to attempt apologies. I was irritated, but she was so distressed that I began to feel sorry for her.

I tried to put her at ease by asking her questions. She answered in short, nervous, machine-gun bursts. How long had she been in this job? "T—two—only two months." Where did she come from? "F—from Chicago, right—right near here." Did she have family here? "Y—yes, my—my mother and—and my brother." She was not getting less panicky. I continued. And her father? "Well—well," she stammered, "he—he's dead at the moment."

She was so nervous she didn't even hear it after she said it. I didn't laugh. I just told her not to worry about that six o'clock appointment, it wasn't all that important. This was untrue, but I was going to miss it, anyway.

III

I smoked cigars in those days, and one afternoon a few weeks after I had started at *The Times*, I was walking down Seventh Avenue in the 50s when I realized that I had left home without any cigars. At the corner of 49th and Seventh Avenue was the I and Y Cigar Store. I went in, asked the clerk for two of my brand, paid, and left. That was the entire event. Next day the gossip column in an evening newspaper began: "Stanley Kauffmann, new drama scribe of *The Times*, buys his cigars at I and Y." I felt as if there were

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something crawling between my shoulder blades that I couldn't reach.

That sort of peering was a nuisance. More serious and more comic was my role as moral champion. This argument was really about the level of newspaper theater criticism, but it focused on me. I had hoped to make some trouble. No one who cared greatly about the theater, which I did, no one who knew something about the theater, which I claimed, could be content with its general quality. I had hoped to use the agency of *The Times* in aid of the best in the theater and against the dross. That was the point, for me, of being there. But to be seen as a hero was embarrassing. It had nothing to do with criticism. To be seen as a villain, which was the more prevalent view, was more gratifying but had nothing to do with criticism, either.

The hero-villain pattern kept on. Twice I found a bouquet of flowers on the floor of my cubicle, tossed over the partition by "Some Friends Here." But I received a letter from a backer of a show I had disliked, in which he enclosed toilet paper, not fresh. Three months after I began the job, *The New Yorker* ran a cartoon mocking my severity. I longed to have the comparative privacy, the different sort of disagreement, at *The New Republic*, along with the sway of *The Times*. And I began to understand that such an idea was only an attempt to play Faust in little.

The most-publicized incident of my eight-month stay grew out of my policy of reviewing from previews whenever possible. One producer who objected to the practice sent me tickets for the last preview of an Irish play he was presenting with a note inviting me to use them at, he said, my peril. Laura and I went to the theater that evening and found that the preview had been cancelled. The producer gave the press some transparent jokes as his reason. It was obvious that he wanted to force me to write an opening-night review. Later I learned that he had bought up every available copy of the play, which had been published in London and had been imported, so that I couldn't read it in advance.

A mob milled around the closed theater that evening. Photographers were there. A few people applauded me, which made me wriggle. Laura was distressed by all the commotion, and I took her away as quickly as possible. Much was made of the matter in *The Times* next day, and in other papers. Laura shook her head as she read the accounts. "They're *all* wrong," she said. "Even those who like you."

I saw the Irish play on opening night. I thought it was well acted but rather trite. The producer had been clever to publicize it as he had done.

IV

I had signed an agreement with *The Times* for a year and a half, as a first installment on a lifetime position. After I had been there four or five months, I began to feel compressed, limited. I had the force of a newspaper behind me, which was helpful, but only a newspaper to write for, which was not. And I chafed at the shining armor that, liked or loathed, seemed to go with the job.

Laura knew my discomfort before I told her. When at last I mentioned it, she replied as if we had already been discussing it. "And you don't even get much fun out of being a big shot," she said. "Oh, yes, I do," I said. "But only up to a point."

We agreed that we would do some hard thinking toward the end of the eighteen months, before I signed on again. But we were spared the trouble. A well-known newspaper critic, much more to more people's liking, unlikely to be burdened with shining armor by one side or the other, became available. Eight months after I began, I was released, and he was hired. Ten minutes after the details of my termination were settled, someone appeared in my cubicle to take away my key to the back door and my credit card. I felt as if he were stripping off my epaulets and said so. He thought my joke out of place.

A few years later I found out that I had been something of a pawn in an office war at *The Times*. My engagement had been advanced by one group and opposed by another, much like the pro and con fumings in the press. The opposition thought that my work in the job had proved their case, and when that other critic's newspaper collapsed and he was free, the opposition moved. When I learned about these matters, long after I was back at *The New Republic*, I was glad I hadn't known about it at the time. It would only have increased my sense of being conscripted in a war that was not the fight I wanted to make.

But before I left my cubicle, I had a bit of revenge. My secretary had put my personal

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belongings in a large clasp envelope. When she wasn't looking, I slipped a pair of long editorial shears, *Times* property, into the envelope. So much for those who thought me a hero. And a finger-snap for *The New York Times*.

I still have the shears. I use them to trim my hair.

Phoooom

THOMAS GREENING

I was in Vermont once on the edge of the woods,
and suddenly, phoooom, partridges came flying
out of the brush and into the sunset. It's the same
thing with a poem. You can't force it.
—Robert Penn Warren

Phoooom—he's gone.
I was not ready for him to go,
and I do take it personally, so
your consolation won't help.
For thirty-seven years after I took his class
I was still in it,
though barely passing.
More than what he taught, I remember
his treasuring each word,
his accent when he described
Florida, "where Ponce de Leon
clanked among the lilies."
But none of us found
the fountain of youth.

Now he's really a fugitive,
gone to who knows what woods.
We can pursue him all we want,
follow the ample clues
he scribbled for us,
but it will be a long time
before we find him again.

✪ THOMAS GREENING is a psychotherapist and the editor of the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*. His poems have appeared in a variety of literary, political, and psychological journals.

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Gifts

KATHERINE SONIAT

Driving past the river cemetery,
you pointed to a shade patch
near the shoreline, saying
that's where you'd be buried,
and it struck me that for seventy
years I had not known your birthdate.

You gave me a gift that day—
your watercolor painting of hats
in the hall closet: the elegant
black top hat which perhaps is
out of magic, the gray herringbone
cap woven for October in stone villages

by the sea. Old hats, older hats, generations
of hats tipped in respect, soon to be closeted
away. Back home that April I set out to find
you a first and perfect birthday gift,
and found you as the father I barely
knew—each birthday card too personal

and sly about the sad paradox of years,
each gift perhaps too effeminate like the blue
lap blanket I gave you last Christmas.
You exchanged it for a green hunting shirt.
None of us wants to be taken
for what's left in the mirror.

Then I spotted the right gift, that khaki cap
in the store window on Main. I almost
had a glimpse of the two of us under the same
hat, my mother saying again, *you're his*
spit, that's how much you look like him,
and I thought of our first exchange.

✪ KATHERINE SONIAT's work has appeared in the *Kenyon Review*, the *Yale Review*, and many other journals. Her most recent collection of poems is *Cracking Eggs*, published by the University Presses of Florida.

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The Bulldog

A Profile of Ludwig Boltzmann

GEORGE GREENSTEIN

Upon accepting a university appointment at Graz, Ludwig Boltzmann thought that he would like to live the country life. He bought a farmhouse several miles outside of town. Deciding one day that no farmhouse would be complete without a cow, he went to the local cattle market to purchase one. Torn shoes flapping, stout, perhaps a bit otherworldly, the great physicist led the beast home through the town. For information on how to milk it, he had already consulted a professor of zoology.

A charming image, and Boltzmann was, in fact, a charming man—earnest, modest, and open in his personal affairs. He was a man of many passions, and his soul was continually swelling with one emotion or another: with tears at beauty, with pride at accomplishment, with anger at theories he regarded as misguided. In his professional life Boltzmann presented a different aspect: formidable, severe, a master of the most difficult and complex of mathematical calculations, and an indomitable battler.

Ludwig Boltzmann battled for acceptance of the atomic hypothesis, a hypothesis much in doubt during his lifetime (1844–1906). His method, and his triumph, was to show that the hypothesis allowed one to comprehend the highly abstract and somewhat abstruse science of thermodynamics in simple terms. Again and again throughout his career he returned to this task. Watching him in debate, a colleague once was reminded of a bulldog: tenacious and unrelenting. That image aptly sums up Boltzmann's entire scientific style.

Thermodynamics is the science of the flow of heat: its content is summarized in two laws. The first law, stating that heat is a form of energy, was developed in fits and starts throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. The notion can be traced back to Count Rumford, the inventor of the Rumford fireplace. Rumford was an American who fled to England to avoid the Revolutionary War, and later became a military engineer employed by the Bavarian government. Impressed by the great amount of heat generated in boring a cannon, he instituted a series of measurements and decided that heat must be some form of motion. The climax of the development of the first law was a paper read by Helmholtz before the Berlin Physical Society, in which he announced the law of conservation of energy; the paper was rejected by the editor of the *Annalen der Physik*, and Helmholtz ended up publishing it privately as a pamphlet.

But if heat is a form of energy, a paradox arises—for energy is hard to come by, but heat is everywhere. The heat energy of air, for instance, is quite impressive: the quantity contained in a few cubic yards would be sufficient to accelerate an automobile to sixty miles per hour. In the process the chunk of air would be cooled down to absolute zero—but once the car arrived at its destination and braked to a halt, its energy of motion would be converted back into heat, first of the brake pads, but ultimately of the air. The journey would have been accomplished with an expenditure of no energy whatsoever. Nor would

✪ GEORGE GREENSTEIN is professor of astronomy at Amherst College. His most recent book is *The Symbiotic Universe*.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to Jacqueline Waldman for her translation of Boltzmann's account of his trip to America.

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any principle prevent us from repeating the process indefinitely, continually draining energy from the atmosphere and then returning it, and so journeying on forever.

Such a perpetual motion machine has never been built. If the first law allows it, some other principle must intervene to forbid it. A clue to the nature of that principle is found by noticing that, before the transfer of energy from air to automobile, the two must have been at roughly equal temperatures. But, during the purported transfer, the air would have cooled while the engine became warmer—and this is a process that nobody has ever witnessed. In reality hot things cool off, and cool things warm.

Only if heat flowed in the wrong direction could perpetual motion exist; that it does not follows from the second of the laws of thermodynamics, which was first formulated in modern form by Rudolf Clausius in 1865. Clausius mathematically defined a certain quantity and then showed that the impossibility of a reverse heat flow followed from the principle that this quantity could only increase. As for what his new quantity was to be called, Clausius was of two minds:

> We might call it the *transformational content* of the body. . . . But as I hold it better to borrow terms for important magnitudes from the ancient languages, so that they may be adopted unchanged in all modern languages, I propose to call [it] the *entropy* of the body, from the Greek word "trope" for "transformation." I have intentionally formed the word "entropy" to be as similar as possible to the word "energy"; for the two magnitudes to be denoted by these words are so nearly allied in their physical meanings, that a certain similarity in designation appears to be desirable.

Boltzmann loved the atomic theory of matter because it explained things. According to it, heat was a form of motion, and the hotter the body, the more rapid the motion. If the moving thing was large—for example, a person—people were accustomed to describing the motion in terms of energy; but if it was too small to be seen—an atom within the person—people did not notice the fact, and contented themselves with speaking in terms of heat. Notice that, according to this view, the first law of thermodynamics has become obvious, indeed trivially so. It has completely lost its status as a separate law of nature.

Boltzmann aimed to do the same with regard to the second law. He made a first cut at the problem the year after Clausius announced it. His paper begins by discussing the status of the first law, which "for a long time already" had been known to follow from the atomic theory. The "long time" amounted to less than twenty years, but Boltzmann himself was only twenty-two at the time—and, indeed, one senses throughout his paper the impatient voice of youth. "It is the purpose of this article to give a purely analytical, completely general proof of the second law," he grandly announced, apparently failing to notice that he had done no such thing.

He did, however, succeed in deriving a result of more limited importance. Five years later Clausius himself published a paper in which, making no reference whatever to Boltzmann's work, the same result was obtained. During the intervening years Clausius had found himself pressed for time and appears not to have bothered to keep up with the literature. Boltzmann's response was hardly a model of tact: he published a paper pointing out his priority in which he reproduced much of his original article as proof (publishing standards seem to have been lower in those days), and imperiously concluded: "I think I have established my priority. I can, finally, only express my pleasure that an authority with Mr. Clausius's reputation is helping to spread the knowledge of my work."

In 1871 he returned to the subject and found a formula for the entropy of a gas expressed, not in Clausius's terms, but in terms of the state of motion of its constituent atoms. And in the following year, Boltzmann managed to prove that the entropy, as defined through his new formula, could only increase.

He had proven the second law; it had been six years since his first attempt. He seems to have been almost diffident about announcing this remarkable triumph—it is tucked away in the middle of a paragraph, thirty pages into a hundred-page paper forbiddingly entitled "Further Studies on the Thermal Equilibrium of Gas Molecules."

Boltzmann's skull was large and strong, and he had what people of his day might have called a philosopher's brow. His face appeared flushed, with a large nose and fleshy ears. His beard was thick, and he had masses

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of brown curly hair. Boltzmann was very nearsighted, and for all his adult life he peered through tiny, Trotskyesque glasses. A delightful drawing of him by one of his students shows a stout figure, not particularly tall, and slightly stooped—something of a Father Christmas figure. He is gesturing earnestly as he explains a difficult point of mathematics. In another drawing Boltzmann bicycles erratically down the street, coattails flying.

Boltzmann was born in 1844 in Vienna, the eldest son of a revenue official. Both his sister and younger brother died at an early age, and his father died when Boltzmann was fifteen. He was educated at home by a series of tutors, one of whom was the composer Anton Bruckner. Bruckner had not lasted very long: arriving one day in the midst of a rainstorm, he had tossed his wet coat upon a bed. Frau Boltzmann reprimanded him, and the composer stormed out, so ending this phase of young Boltzmann's musical education. In later life Boltzmann became quite accomplished on the piano and would often play at musicales—"with rousing fire and with secure technique," according to one observer.

Boltzmann was both a wizard of a mathematician and a physicist of international renown. The magnitude of his output of scientific papers was positively unnerving. He would publish two, three, sometimes four monographs a year; each one was forbiddingly dense, festooned with mathematics, and as much as a hundred pages in length. He was what we would now call a hot property, continually receiving job offers. During his professional career he bounced from university to university throughout Germany and Austria.

"The stars bend like slaves," he wrote, "to laws not decreed for them by human intelligence, but gleaned from them." The gleaning of these laws, and the development of detailed, mathematical theories, were his greatest loves. He lived, in fact, at a time when theoretical physics was just being recognized as a separate discipline. A document exists from this period in which the faculty of the University at Munich finds it necessary to describe to their administration the developing specialization of physics, and the need to recognize theory as a field in itself, in order to justify their proposal to hire Boltzmann specifically as a theoretician.

Boltzmann did, in fact, spend many years at Munich. For a time there he met weekly at one of its famous beer halls for chats with a group of scientists and engineers. Although his research interests were highly abstract, he was fascinated by technology. For a time he supported an inventor who, long in advance of the Wright brothers, attempted to develop heavier-than-air flight. (Boltzmann gave a number of lectures on the subject, complete with model airplane.) For electricity he foresaw a great future: "Perhaps the time is not far off," he once wrote "when every household bill will celebrate those great electricians Ohm and Ampere; and perhaps in the coming century every cook will know how many watts are needed to roast meat, and how many ohms her lamp has." When a colleague developed a new light bulb, Boltzmann invited members of the Vienna Physical Society to his home for a demonstration. (Sandwiches and fifty liters of beer were set out, but only seven guests showed up.) Boltzmann also built from scratch an electric sewing machine for his wife.

In spite of his many successes—he was one of the most prominent physicists of his time—Boltzmann was modest and unassuming in personal conversation and a man of great charm. Upon visiting his home, students and colleagues alike were immediately put at ease. He was widely known to be a soft touch for a favor and would pace the streets miserably for hours if forced to flunk a student; toward the end of his life, he never could bring himself to flunk anybody. He was a ready weeper and would cry openly at the railroad station whenever circumstances forced him to leave his wife for long.

Boltzmann was subject to recurring depressions, and sometimes in company would lapse into long, dismal silences from which he could not be roused. He himself would comment upon these intense swings of emotion from great joy to deep grief. In the light of modern knowledge, it is clear that he suffered from manic depression; he committed suicide in 1906.

By 1872 Boltzmann felt he had shown that Clausius's second law of thermodynamics followed from the hypothesis that matter is composed of atoms. Unfortunately his proof could not possibly have been correct, for on the basis of the atomic hypothesis, the law is false. It was the British physicist James Clerk Max-

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well who had realized this, and he appears to have first mentioned his reasoning in a letter to a friend in December of 1867. In this letter, Maxwell outlined a specific method by which heat could be made to pass from a colder to a hotter body, thus reducing the entropy and violating the law.

Maxwell's argument shows how to build a perpetual motion automobile. It is a sort of Stanley Steamer, except with improvements: the engine consists merely of some hot air in a bottle, one wall of which is pierced by a hole providing a contact with the surrounding atmosphere. The hole is so small that only one atom at a time can pass through it. Maxwell showed how, as a result of this passage, the hot gas in the bottle could be made to become even hotter—hot enough to boil water and thus propel the car.

The atomic theory visualized both the atmosphere and the air in the bottle as composed of atoms in a constant state of motion. The hotter the gas, the more rapid the motion. As a result, even though there was no net flow of air through the hole—no wind—there was an incessant, invisible interchange. Every so often a rapidly moving atom from inside the bottle happened to find its way out through the hole and cooled the engine; every so often a slow atom from the surrounding air passed in and cooled it even more.

Thus, according to the atomic hypothesis, hot things cooled off and cold things warmed. The flaw that Maxwell saw in this argument revolved around a discovery he had recently made that the atoms making up a gas did not all move with the same velocity. Even a cold gas contained the occasional rapidly moving particle, and even a hot gas contained a few nearly at rest. In his letter Maxwell suggested a means whereby this fact could be used to reverse the flow of heat and thus violate the second law. He proposed putting a door on the hole connecting the engine to air and putting a gatekeeper beside the door. The job of this gatekeeper would be to watch the incoming atoms and decide which to let through. Simply by opening and shutting the door, it could arrange that the only particles that filtered outwards from the engine would be the few slowly moving ones, and those that filtered inwards would be only the fast ones.

In a subsequent letter Maxwell referred to his being as "a doorkeeper, very intelligent and exceedingly quick, with microscopic eyes." Nowadays we refer to it as Maxwell's Demon. Simply by the application of knowledge, such a being would be capable of violating the second law of thermodynamics. The prettiest thing about Maxwell's creation is the reinterpretation it introduces of entropy. Clausius's definition of this quantity had been highly mathematical and abstract and had provided little insight into its underlying nature. Maxwell's achievement was to show that entropy is related to information.

More precisely, entropy is related to information's absence—that is, to confusion. In most circumstances the physical universe is "stupid": its operations take place without the benefit of an ordering intelligence. But the function of Maxwell's Demon is to impose order on this random and generally messy world. The low-entropy state it acts to bring about is a highly structured one, in which all the atoms of a gas move with precisely the same velocity. Conversely, the increase of entropy corresponds to the lapse into disorder that follows once the Demon's hand is lifted. The second law of thermodynamics describes a general decline into confusion of the universe: it says that the children's room is guaranteed to become messier if they do not keep picking things up.

Boltzmann did not immediately respond to the conundrum posed by Maxwell's Demon. He appears not even to have known about it at the time he formulated his "proof" of the second law. The lapse is all the more remarkable in that Maxwell's argument was spelled out in his popular textbook of thermodynamics, a book that by 1872 had been available for five years. It was not Maxwell but Josef Loschmidt, Boltzmann's colleague and friend, who ultimately forced him to return to the subject.

Loschmidt had been born in poverty and tended cattle in his youth; in middle age, while earning a living as a grade-school teacher, he made a famous calculation for which he was granted an honorary degree and a faculty position at the University of Vienna. Loschmidt could hardly be accused of not believing in atoms—he was the first person to determine their sizes. Nevertheless, the objection he raised to Boltzmann's work struck at the very heart of the program of the atomic theory of matter.

Loschmidt's objection made no mention of the mathematical details of Boltzmann's

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"proof." Rather, it related to the one-way nature of the flow of time. The notion can be made precise by imagining a film of some sequence of events that is shown backwards. Most such reversed films would look nonsensical—one might show people growing younger rather than older; another, air distributed uniformly about a room suddenly rushing together to enact the unpopping of a balloon; and a third, heat flowing from colder to hotter bodies. Such examples dramatize the irreversible nature of the passage of time in most circumstances. But an entire class of physical phenomena do not exhibit such irreversibility at all. These are the phenomena treated by the science of mechanics. A film made of a swinging pendulum, for instance, if shown in reverse, would show nothing more than the same swinging pendulum. So, too, with one of a planet orbiting the sun, or of the collision of two billiard balls. All of these purely mechanical processes can occur "backwards" as well as "forwards"—and, indeed, the distinction between the two terms has little meaning in these examples.

Entropy is time's arrow. It is entropy that distinguishes processes that pick out a direction to the flow of time from those that do not. Aging, the popping of a balloon, and the normal flow of heat are processes in which the entropy increases. But the incessant motion of atoms, which according to the atomic hypothesis constituted the reality underlying these processes, is analogous to the motion of a large number of billiard balls—and nothing in the physics of this motion picks out a direction to the flow of time. The popping of a balloon, for instance, corresponds to the sudden rushing outwards of a large number of atoms originally confined to a small region of space. It is analogous to the opening of a billiards game, in which the initially neat arrangement of balls placed in the rack is shattered. The reversal of this motion is physically possible, and would cause them to reassemble into precisely their original pattern—according to the atomic hypothesis, balloons could unpop.

For every atomic motion that increased the entropy, Loschmidt could point to another that decreased it: the reversed motion. Thus, he argued, there would be no general tendency for the entropy to increase, and Boltzmann's program of comprehending the second law of thermodynamics was doomed to failure. And more than that—the concept that matter was made of atoms could not be reconciled with the irreversible nature of the flow of time.

Maxwell's and Loschmidt's objections each describe ways in which the entropy can be made to decrease by means that involve knowledge and intelligence—with taking care. Maxwell's Demon would have to scrutinize every approaching atom in order to decide which to let through the gate. To reverse the motion of each escaping atom from a popped balloon, a similarly encyclopedic knowledge would be required.

But Boltzmann, finally forced by Loschmidt's argument to return to the problem, focused on yet another means of decreasing entropy: not through the application of knowledge, but simply through waiting. By the law of averages, as children picked up and put down their clothing randomly, once in a while they would toss everything into the closet by chance. Similarly, if one waited long enough, a situation would arise in and of itself in which the few rapidly moving air particles would make their way into an engine, and the motion of atoms from a balloon would reverse.

The second law of thermodynamics must possess a character quite different from that of every other natural law. Previously, the laws of physics had been taken to be absolute: unsupported bodies invariably fell, and energy was always conserved. But entropy only increased most of the time. Boltzmann's reaction to this recognition was a remarkable creative shift. He developed an entirely new way of thinking about the second law, and it is one that has always impressed me as being of marvelous beauty and great subtlety. He thought of it not in terms of collisions among atoms, but in terms of randomness and probability.

Boltzmann analyzed how likely it would be for the entropy to decrease spontaneously. He showed that the state of greatest entropy was the most probable state and that while other distributions corresponding to decreased entropy were possible, they were overwhelmingly less likely. Because of the very great number of atoms involved in any real gas, sequences of decreasing entropy would never be observed in practice. Thus our daily experience of the irreversible nature of the passage of time was not in contradiction with the atomic hypothesis. While it was true that heat could briefly flow in the wrong direction and

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that balloons could unpop, such sequences of events were so rare that they had almost certainly never happened in the entire history of the Earth.

But everything not forbidden is compulsory, to reverse T. H. White's famous dictum. Given enough time and enough space, even the most unlikely event is guaranteed to occur. Loschmidt's insight into the nature of time in physics led Boltzmann to speculations about the universe as a whole.

Somewhere in the cosmos, Boltzmann argued, there must exist isolated pockets in which events were taking place in the wrong direction—in which time was running backwards. Entire galaxies could be involved in this process. His first thought was that, if we were to observe such galaxies through our telescopes, we would see creatures walking backwards, growing younger, and the like. But he quickly realized that we would never be able to perform such observations; for such a galaxy's stars, rather than emitting light, would be steadily absorbing it, the light pouring inwards upon them from the rim of the universe in the time reversal of the normal flow. Such galaxies would be entirely invisible to us. If we could send a message to the inhabitants of such a backwards-running world, they would forget it the instant after they received it, for their memories would be running backwards in time. They would "remember" the message up to the instant it arrived.

But as the entropy decreased in such isolated pockets, it nevertheless continued increasing in the universe as a whole. The cosmos, then, must have begun in a state of unusually low entropy and has been evolving toward more disordered states ever since. Such speculations led Boltzmann to a new view of the origin of the universe. He came to think of this origin, not as an act in which matter was created, but as an act in which order was imposed upon already existing matter. The clock of time was set to zero, and the universe set forth upon its downwards-running course, by a cosmic Maxwell's Demon—a Maxwell's God. Creation was an act of intelligence.

Seen from the standpoint of Boltzmann's new conception of the meaning of entropy and the law of its increase, his 1872 "proof" of this law had been incomplete. But, in his response to Loschmidt's argument, not once did he acknowledge this incompleteness. Furthermore, Boltzmann may never have come to the reinterpretation of the second law, and the radical extension of its scope, had he not been forced to do so by Loschmidt. But Boltzmann never acknowledged his debt.

Everything about this episode is marked by miscommunication and confusion—by, one might say, high entropy. As Clausius had not known of Boltzmann's work, and Boltzmann had not known of Maxwell's, so most physicists of his day failed to come to grips with Boltzmann's more sophisticated analysis of the second law. As late as twenty years after he had effectively answered Loschmidt's objection, a new attack on Boltzmann's work was launched by Ernst Zermelo, an assistant of Max Planck, who formulated a paradox similar to Loschmidt's. Page after page of the scientific journals were filled with discussion of Zermelo's paradox, even though it can be resolved in precisely the same way that Boltzmann had resolved that of Loschmidt.

How can we understand this persistent miscomprehension on the part of the physicists? It cannot result from simple lack of recognition, for Boltzmann was widely regarded as one of the foremost physicists of his day. Part of the reason must lie with the nature of his analysis, which I can testify from personal experience is of unusual subtlety—you think you have it, but then it slips away. But part of the reason must also lie with Boltzmann himself. His papers were wordy and convoluted, and he never seemed able to say a thing in one word if ten would do. Coupled with his immense scientific output, his writing style led a number of his contemporaries to throw up their hands. "By the study of Boltzmann I have been unable to understand him," complained Maxwell in a letter to a friend. "He could not understand me on account of my shortness, and his length was and is an equal stumbling-block to me." Maxwell appears to have stopped reading Boltzmann's papers by about 1870.

In the summer of 1905 Boltzmann traveled to America to give a series of lectures at Berkeley. In "Voyage of a German Professor to Eldorado," an article he published not long thereafter, he offered his account of that trip.

The account suffers from the endless wordiness that so maddened Maxwell. Boltzmann tells in detail what he had for dinner on the night of his departure, what the band played

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during the ocean crossing, and far more than one would care to know of a growth that developed in his armpit. On the other hand, Boltzmann's style can be courtly and exquisite, and it is often poignantly beautiful.

At times the most delightful humor breaks out. He pays a visit to the Stanford campus, built in memory of the Stanfords' son Leland, who had recently died. "In Europe," Boltzmann comments, "when such a tragedy happens, a woman goes out and buys herself a dozen cats or a parrot. These people built a university." During a visit to a laboratory of artificial insemination, Boltzmann muses on what a difference to society the technique would make if applied to humans. Women could drop down to the corner store to buy little bottles of liquid—one for boys, another for girls. They would no longer need men, "and at this point, wine would become totally obsolete."

Everything about Berkeley fascinated Boltzmann—the number of women about (his fiancée had vainly struggled for years to enroll as a university student in Austria); its governance (Mrs. William Randolf Hearst, the newspaper baron's widow, controlled it absolutely, passing on to its president her decisions); and its heating system (hot water piped through metallic, boxlike structures; radiators, apparently, were a rarity in 1905).

There is also much condescension in Boltzmann's account of California. In many ways his attitude is that of an aristocrat strolling through the hustings—everything is interesting, but nothing quite measures up. During his trip across the country, he is thrilled by the sight of the Sierra Nevada through the train window, but takes care to remind the reader that it is no Semmering. He is invited for the weekend to Mrs. Hearst's estate, surrounded by "a fantastic gate, and not that ugly"; and there at an after-dinner musicale where a music professor performed on the piano, Boltzmann notes, "He played well, and even knew that Beethoven wrote nine symphonies, and that the ninth was the last."

On the other hand, Boltzmann often found himself impressed by California, both its natural beauties and the spirit of the place. If Mahler could only compose a symphony evoking the glories of Yosemite, "the trees there would have shivered for joy"—although he could not resist the dig that the people there would not have understood it. Standing at the base of the Lick Observatory, named in honor of the wealthy philanthropist who had financed it and even then lay buried beneath its supporting pillar, Boltzmann muses of "two idealists, Schiller and Lick. Schiller would be saying 'I don't need you,' but Lick would prove him to the contrary." "Happy the nation in which millionaires think idealistically, and idealists become millionaires."

Throughout Boltzmann's account, the reader encounters a man passionately engaged in his travels. Here is someone in love with life and who takes it to the fullest; who appreciates good food and wine and the company of women; and who can write of his ocean voyage:

> I wept when I saw the color of the sea—how can a mere color make one cry? Or moonlight, or the luminescence of the sea in a pitch black night? . . . But if there is one thing which is more worthy of our admiration than natural beauty, it is the art of men who have conquered this never-ending sea so fully in a struggle that has been going since the time of the Phoenicians.

This same man was to die by his own hand within the year.

Boltzmann hailed the atomic hypothesis because of the mechanistic account it gave of thermodynamics. He argued that only through such mechanistic accounts could true understanding be reached. They allowed us to visualize the means whereby things worked—the actual nuts and bolts of the universe: what happened inside. They were the very stuff of explanation.

But they are not the stuff of physics anymore. One of the great shifts in thought of physics has been the recognition of the essential insufficiency of mechanistic theories of nature. This shift took place toward the end of the nineteenth century; it is the tragedy of Boltzmann's life that he had the bad luck to be caught in the tide.

I can still recall as a student reading of a nineteenth-century theory that purported to explain the mechanism underlying the forces between electric charges. The author of this theory asked students to imagine two balloons immersed in water, both expanding and contracting in a regular oscillation. Because of this oscillation, each balloon produced a series of waves through the water, which then exerted forces upon the other. It turned out

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that if the two balloons oscillated synchronously, the net result would be a repulsion between them. But if one expanded while the other contracted, the force would be one of attraction.

I was delighted by this ingenious explanation of the attraction of unlike charges and the repulsion of like charges. But by now this theory has fallen into oblivion. The problem is that it fails to explain anything else about charges—why they develop magnetic properties if set in motion, for instance, or how they emit electromagnetic waves. In Boltzmann's time the most elaborate models of electromagnetism were proposed to fill in these gaps. In one, space was envisaged as being filled with ether, an invisible substance imbued with the most marvelous properties; in another, with a network of rods, levers, gears, and countergears. Each model was more ingenious than the last; none of them has stood the test of time.

With each failure, the implication became stronger that the phenomena of electromagnetism could never be explained in such language. This was simply not how electromagnetism worked. The very program of searching for mechanism in nature—Boltzmann's program—came to be regarded as misguided.

One of the most influential thinkers of the new school of thought in physics was Ernst Mach. As much a philosopher as a physicist, Mach subjected the principles of explanation in science to the most intense scrutiny. He was a radical empiricist and held that only things actually experienced were objectively real. Everything else was our construct, and subject to doubt. He even considered the possibility that atoms existed in other than three dimensions.

Mach conceded the many successes of the atomic theory, but he resisted the implication that this proved atoms existed. Rather he regarded atoms as convenient fictions—possessed of the same degree of reality as, say, the Average Woman. Insurance companies knew all about such a "woman": her age, her weight, her life expectancy, but this did not mean she was to be found walking down the street. "Have you ever seen one?" Mach would grumble loudly from the audience as Boltzmann lectured on his atoms.

Boltzmann battled it out in lecture halls and in the pages of the scientific journals. Never did he shrink from the debate. He seems to have enjoyed arguments, and on numerous occasions went out of his way to arrange them. Boltzmann was, in fact, one of the great scientific battlers of all time—one contemporary account referred to him as "a most remarkable polemicist; much feared in congress"—and the criticisms he wrote of his opponents' positions were scathing. His struggle with the chemist Wilhelm Ostwald, another of his critics, became so intense that at one point even Mach thought things had gone too far and attempted a reconciliation.

Boltzmann's personality exhibited a curious mixture of toughness and even arrogance in these professional debates, together with modesty and friendliness in his personal relationships. I myself find the separation he was able to maintain between these two spheres of his life astonishing. Boltzmann's published attacks on Ostwald are withering, but the two men remained close personal friends throughout their rivalry, and often visited each other's homes. After Boltzmann's tragic death and the final resolution of the debate on the existence of atoms, Ostwald acknowledged his rival's success, and he wrote of him as "a man superior to us all in intelligence, and in the clarity of his science." Only a man of fundamental goodwill could have inspired such a graceful acknowledgment from one against whom he had written so scathingly.

Nevertheless the attacks from all sides, and the persistent misunderstanding of his work, weighed on Boltzmann. An early twentieth-century textbook defined atoms as "imaginary units of which bodies are aggregates," and so august an authority as the legendary eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* refused to commit itself as to their reality. My general impression is that more people were inclined to accept the existence of atoms in Boltzmann's youth than toward the end of his life. The more time passed, the more he came to be regarded as a throwback to an outmoded way of thought.

Shortly before Boltzmann's death, Einstein published a paper in which he argued that Brownian motion—an incessant jiggling of microscopic particles suspended in a liquid—resulted from the continual bombardment of these particles by atoms. Einstein's contribution turned out to be crucial, and within a few years it persuaded most people of the truth of the atomic hypothesis—and by implication, of

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the correctness of Boltzmann's mechanistic understanding of thermodynamics. But there is no evidence that Boltzmann ever learned of this work, and he did not live to see the vindication of his views.

"I am conscious of being only one individual struggling weakly against the stream of time," he wrote. And elsewhere: "I see myself as a man grown old on scientific experiences. Yes, I might even say that of those who embraced the old with a full heart I alone am left. . . . I present myself to you therefore as a reactionary, a man left behind."

During the last months of his life, Boltzmann's mental illness rose up to claim him. These months were marked by nearly unremitting despair. He was a speaker of great skill, and his lectures were generally packed, but he continually dreaded that his memory would fail him one day in front of a class. He was subject to recurring anxieties and confided to friends that he was losing his creativity, that his nerves were overstrained, that he suffered from neurasthenia. Toward the end, his eyesight, never good, deteriorated still further; and he suffered from asthma, angina pectoris, and severe headaches.

"Father gets worse every day," his wife once wrote to their daughter. "I have lost my confidence in the future. I had imagined a better life." In the fall of 1905 he decided to visit a mental hospital, but he left shortly after arriving and returned home. He had announced a series of lectures for the following summer, but because of his condition he was forced to cancel them. That winter two students visited him at home in order to take an oral examination; as they left the house, they heard from the front hall a series of heartrending groans. Colleagues feared he would never again be able to exercise his professorship and spoke of the need to keep him under constant medical surveillance.

In September of 1906 he took his family to Duino, a beautiful resort on the Adriatic. On the morning of his death he seemed unnaturally excited. While his wife and daughter went swimming, he hung himself in the hotel room. His daughter, whom he deeply loved, was the first to discover the suicide. "Never would I have believed such an end was possible," he had commented shortly before to a friend.

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The Great American Newspaper

KEVIN G. BARNHURST

Journalism consists in buying white paper at two cents a pound and selling it at ten cents a pound.
—Charles A. Dana

Last week, for the first time, my son joined me when I read the Sunday newspaper. He donned his petitioning look—half smile, half squint—and said, "Can I have the, uh, comics?" I'm territorial when it comes to my newspaper, but that section, well, it's just a wrapper for the ads and color supplements. So I handed it over, and he said thanks and spread himself out on the rug. A typical Sunday paper takes me an hour, turning pages from front to back at the dining room table, but when I was finished, he was still poring over the funny papers. Things like "Mary Worth" don't really interest my nine-year-old boy, and so, I wondered, what was he doing? What makes him want to use a newspaper so badly that he will wade through comic strips that must be to him incomprehensible?

My own fascination with newspapers began early. I remember my father, seated in the big armchair, hidden except for his legs and fingertips behind the *Salt Lake Tribune*. My mother read, as I do now, at the table. As a child, I can remember wanting to read the newspaper, too. I began at about my son's age with the comics, first reading "Nancy" and then adding "Beetle Bailey" and others. When I could read them all, I began skipping the ones I didn't care for. Then I would look at the rest of the newspaper, moving from cartoon to cartoon—they had these sprinkled around then—and I sometimes discovered amazing little fillers. On the front page I found "Today's Chuckle," and on the local news page something called "Sam the Sad Cynic Says" in a column by someone named Dan Valentine. Before long I was reading the whole column. News stories began to catch my eye, and then I was hooked.

Reading the newspaper seemed like a grown-up thing to do. When I started reading the business news, sometime in college, it felt like a rite of passage. Getting through the page was work, but I thought I was old enough, so I stuck with it. Now I browse those pages, too. I don't know if the way I use the newspaper can be called reading. What once seemed a significant task now seems inconsequential. I hardly pay attention, skimming over the headlines, reading less and less as I get older, or skipping directly to the item or two that I read by habit.

Yet I can't get along without a newspaper. Sometimes in disgust I cancel my local paper, only to subscribe again. My father did this, too, switching to the *Deseret News* and back again. Living in a two-newspaper town, he could have his tantrums without missing a single day's news. While living in the New Hampshire countryside, I would travel ten miles every Sunday, through snow, freezing rain, or mud, to pick up the *Boston Globe* at the village store—the same trip I would grumble about taking for a gallon of milk. But a newspaper is more than food. It is a ritual, little understood, that I am handing down to

✪ KEVIN G. BARNHURST is assistant professor of graphic arts in the department of journalism at the University of Illinois, Champaign. His essays have been published in *Commentary* and THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

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my sons. It is a part of my cultural heritage as well as a convenience, a tool for daily living. Even as I read it less I depend on it more, and that makes me curious about the newspaper as an object.

Watching my son explore the newspaper made me see it with new eyes, and I didn't like what I saw. Newspapers have changed since I began reading them. Someone has been tinkering. Now, instead of all those real-life events, serendipitous cartoons, clipped opinions, and odd facts, we seem to get fewer and fewer items, all of the less-disposable type: literary-style news analysis, fine-art illustrations, arcane criticism, and popular-mechanics charts. In my lifetime, the *New York Times* has slowly metamorphosed from a newspaper of record to a newsmagazine of polite opinion. The elites in my midwestern town read it to learn what issues and problems are fashionable. Smaller newspapers follow suit. My local newspaper is not a newspaper of record but of conservative fashion, political as well as social. The newspaper was once a grubbier, lower, more attractive form.

The American newspaper is fascinating in its functions. Before it ends up in the trash, it gets wrapped around rubbish, used to line bird cages or wash windows, rolled up for a weapon against flies, or spread overhead as an umbrella. Children rip it up to make papier-mâché, put it under clay putty and paint boxes, fold it into airplanes and paper hats. It's a gift wrap, padding for parcels, a drop cloth, tinder, and a wrapper for hot peanuts at the game. Some people even roll logs and make dresses and lamps from it. There is something appealing about the pattern and the texture, and also something symbolic.

Newspapering expresses American values—the entrepreneurial zeal of the reporter, interviewing people, being places first. It is objectivity and object, American idealism made material. It is an invention by a culture of inventors, a gadget, a gimcrack, a gizmo, an all-purpose object not unlike the American city—congested, exciting, funny, and just a bit garish. A newspaper is the American persona played up big—a braggart, a schemer, a behind-the-scenes do-gooder, a power broker, a dynamo, a know-it-all. News travels fast, and a newspaper is an artifact of deadlines, hustle, clang and crash, rolls of paper flying through the presses, headlines twice the size of the events shouted rapid-fire from the street corner. The newspaper is American overabundance embodied—an embarrassment of facts, more than anyone could ever digest, a luxury of stories to be mined and picked over, bargain-basement style. It expresses the American love for the compendium, the almanac, the Whitmanesque listing.

The newspaper is an essentially democratic form. Just about everybody can afford one. Because it crosses the barriers of race, money, and status, it is the tributary of universal suffrage. It informs the self-governing citizenry. "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without government," said Jefferson, "I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter." The newspaper is the fourth estate, a vital check on government, a watchdog for the republic. On the pages of the newspaper are distilled the misery and misfortune, comedy and catastrophe of national life. Reading news is a civic duty taught in American schools. Citizens assert more proprietary interest in their local newspaper than they do in any mere business. We call it "our newspaper," and we chastise it for any lapse in completeness or accuracy because it is the tangible record of our community life. But it records more than that. The local newspaper chronicles important events from the lives of acquaintances, neighbors, friends—lives like our own. Personal experience day by day is played against a backdrop of news. We remember our own lives by the texture of the news of the day. And once in a while our own lives become news.

My family has been in the newspaper only a few times. Once was when my sister fell from our apartment window. She was only two or three years old, trying to reach a doll propped on the sill. She fell two and a half stories to the sidewalk below and survived only because she landed on the doll. That was a news story. I know about it—this was before I was born—because the family has two relics of the event: one is my sister's bent little finger, which was the only thing broken in the fall; the other is a newspaper clipping. In some envelope or bureau or trunk, American families save the clippings about births and weddings and blue ribbons won. A relative once showed me the front-page story about my mom. She was identified as a mother of six. The reporter had tried

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to reconstruct the last moments of her life, before she fell from Ensign Peak near Salt Lake City. The paper was yellowed and worn. It felt strangely thick and brittle. I held it only for a moment before folding it back into its place between the pages of a book. These scraps of newsprint bearing the traces of our lives are somehow beyond price.

No printed medium has as much room for ordinary people as a newspaper does. Books are for the renowned, magazines for the celebrity. As a child I was taught to respect books, not to write in them, fold them, or tear them, but to handle them with care, to usé a bookmark, a book bag, and to make a brown paper cover. My family treasured any magazines that came into the house. Copies of *National Geographic* were displayed on the coffee table, arrayed in the shape of a fan. A far cry from the stately book or chic magazine, the newspaper is jerry-rigged, a Rube Goldberg form—big, fat, and dirty, like old American industry. The ink comes off on your fingers and clothes. The paper smells of dust and makes you sneeze. Inelegant and ephemeral, the newspaper is least among forms. But it bears examination because it has entered the culture as an archetype, an image infused with symbolism.

Americans pay scant attention to the visible form of things. Such considerations are thought to be superficial—mere window dressing for the real substance that lies in words and actions. Aesthetic concerns, devoid of practical value, are relegated to kindergarten, where art is a form of play. In school, Americans study words, and our visual knowledge remains as we acquired it in childhood. Visually uneducated, we find it difficult to appraise the form rather than the content of the news. If we could again see a newspaper as a child does before learning to read, we would be aware of it as an *object*. Instead of events and ideas, the page would be the sum of its musty smell and taste, the crackling sounds it makes, and its significant link to our parents. Somewhere in our earliest memories, we retain this sensual and emotional tie to the newspaper form.

The visual appearance of the page—the blacks and whites in different textures and shades of gray, forming a multitude of shapes in many sizes—still resonates with meaning, even if it is inarticulate. When we see a horizontal shape, even as a small child, we can make sense of it by drawing on our experience with flat things in the environment. The horizon, building foundations, and our own position in sleep seem tranquil. Anything vertical we can associate with standing erect and with the precarious images of cliffs and skyscrapers.

In a newspaper, short lines of type get stacked into vertical shapes. The same text in long lines will make a low horizontal shape. Research suggests that horizontal blocks of text seem comfortable; vertical columns, it is said, create a hostile environment for reading. But at either extreme, the lines will cause discomfort: too short, and you're jumping constantly from word to word and struggling with hyphenations; too long, and you get lost going from one line down to the next.

All the graphic attributes of the text and headlines—how large the type is, the amount of space between the lines—can be varied to extremes or kept neutral. Headlines with bold, condensed, italic type made entirely of capital letters seem active; headlines with lighter weights and lowercase letters seem more calm. Laying out a newspaper page involves dozens of decisions about size and shape not only of text but of pictures and other elements. Each decision pushes the image toward the calm or energetic extremes, or nearer the neutral ground.

Any newspaper we read conveys its personality through the accumulation of these visual cues. We assume that it is the writing that makes the difference, but that is only partly true. When we see the same wire story laid out differently in, say, the *Washington Post* and the *New York Post*, we draw different conclusions about the quality, clarity, and authority of the writing. No matter how strenuously we may deny it, the form of the news matters. It elicits meanings from our personal experience. It gives substance to a ritual of daily living and weaves our individual lives into the fabric of American culture.

The form of the newspaper developed slowly, beginning late in the eighteenth century, as American journalists adapted the newspaper from its European antecedents. The process was an accretion, like the building of a coral reef. By the 1930s, enough structural remains of the attitudes, values, and beliefs of ordinary journalists had accumulated that the newspaper became an archetype, its contours clearly defined. The form

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was a naïve expression of the culture: its philosophy democratic and idealistic, its personality busy, crowded, and complicated. It was a seat-of-the-pants product of people and machinery driven to the limits to put out all the news first, however crude the form. Strong, a little pushy or brazen, it embodied perfectly the urgent and combative nature of the news. This archetype is stored in cultural memory as an image, and it probably bears more resemblance to the *Daily Planet* than to any real newspaper.

If you were to invent a form that expressed the whole brash hubbub of daily news, you would probably recreate the archetypal American newspaper, and it would probably look something like this: The text typography would be as small as possible—pushing right to the limits of intelligibility (and beyond what some could read without a magnifying glass). You would make the columns narrow, say four or five words wide (about one alphabet). Text columns would be very vertical, as vertical as you could get them. For headlines, you would choose typography that again pushes the reader to the limits, would make them bold, condensed, all capital letters—all the things that emphasize the vertical aspects of the letterform. You would use a typeface that is crude and dense—one that would withstand the pounding of thousands of impressions of metal on paper. You would use italic type. Research shows that all these things present difficulties for the reader; but then, so does news. Instead of arranging the elements neatly in boxes, you would scatter them and build up irregular shapes, so that stories, especially major ones, would have a jagged silhouette. You wouldn't leave any space but would crowd everything in, and you would develop a complex system that would create layering, so that at any distance, new items would become apparent. You would cram in as many tiny items as you could. Of course you would use pictures that were equally active: people at war, riots, or, at the very least, felons being led from court. You would play them as large as the dense packing of the page would permit, but never so large that they did not seem detailed, and you would squeeze in mug shots to exaggerate the difference of scale.

I am not talking here about any single styling detail that newspaper editors like to debate—whether to use ruled lines between the columns or a specific typeface like Bodoni. The newspaper has taken a thousand individual styles within the larger parameters of this archetypal form. What is significant is not the particulars of dress but the overall pattern, which reveals our assumptions about the role of the newspaper in culture and its use by common people.

Reporters and editors nowadays believe that their stories get read—much as a book gets read, only quicker. For that purpose, a busy, crowded, complicated newspaper will not do. What is needed, it is felt, is clarity and simplicity, so that the ideas can flow unhindered by the setting. Besides informing the reader, editors will admit other purposes—to entertain, warn, persuade, enlighten, and so on. These uses are no different from those of a book, and are best served by the clear, simple appearance of a book page. When editors hire researchers to study the best typography, they convey these purposes. And researchers bring their own set of assumptions. Typographic research has traditionally focused on the problems of legibility (whether letterforms can be easily identified) and readability (whether words can be comfortably understood). The researcher typically measures the speed of reading and the comprehension—two activities enhanced by a neutral typographic form, such as that found in books.

Designers and artists contribute yet another set of assumptions about newspaper design, most of them based on aesthetics. They want the newspaper page to achieve a modicum of unity, balance, contrast, rhythm, and proportion. This vocabulary of form, derived from classical philosophy, suggests a marketing strategy: make the page pleasing to the eye, and thus entice the reader to sample the editorial product. Artists tend to admire the painting as a form, designers the book. In art school, the newspaper doesn't rate.

Now these assumptions of writers, artists, and researchers would never get you to the archetypal newspaper form I just described. The typography of the text, if you tested it on any group, would not score well on any of the measures of readability. The researcher would say, make the columns wider, make the type larger, use a face that is less crude so that the form of each letter is more legible. The researcher could prove that type in all capital letters is harder to read, bold type is harder to read. Indented, italic, and centered headlines

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would not test nearly as well as any of the less tortured forms. The researcher would say, get rid of the boldface, make the headline "down style" (lowercase except for the initial capital letter), in roman, of a reasonable size, and don't make it either so horribly long or short. Keep it in the neutral zone.

The graphic artist would hate *everything* about the typography and would strongly support the researcher—but would add a few more suggestions. He would dislike the irregular shapes and would want those jagged forms removed. He would want all the little items, spread haphazardly on the page, to be grouped together and given a home. Order and logic would require that. There's just too much going on here, he would say, and besides, with this new, larger type on wider, more horizontal columns, you've got to get rid of all this junk, clean it out. Then it will look accessible, inviting. So the designer, along with the researcher, pushes, and the poor editor, like any naïve artist, typically yields. After all, the editor thinks, reporters want their stories longer and photographers want their pictures bigger. And, anyhow, these complicated pages are hard to lay out.

What these assumptions of writers, artists, and researchers have done, bit by bit, is dismantle the newspaper from its native, expressive form. Publishers first began to hire typography and marketing experts in the 1930s and graphic designers in the 1960s. By the 1970s, the newspaper began to resemble something else entirely. It looked like a book, or a magazine, or a poster—anything but a newspaper. By 1980, Mario Garcia, a leading newspaper consultant, admired the Midland, Texas, newspaper for being "clean, easy-to-read," for its "large photos, and an almost totally horizontal format for its front page. The nameplate . . . has been surrounded with white space. . . . Few stories are played up on page one, but they are packaged to provide comfortable reading. The headlines show little size variation. . . . This type of front page is easy to design and easy to look at."

The content of the newspaper changed as well. Stories were longer, and there were fewer of them. Where once a reporter wrote at least half a dozen stories in a day, now he wrote one or part of one. Instead of three stories written on three different fires in the city, an editor would run only the biggest or combine the information from all three into one story built around a similarity, a unifying element, or theme. One of the fires might be described as an example, representing all the fires of that sort, or the story might focus on any of a number of fire-related issues or trends. Somewhere along the line, editors, perceiving a need to differentiate a newspaper from a television set, hit upon the length of the story as print journalism's principal distinction. Stories, they discovered, could be made longer by spinning out the facts into a web of interpretations, historic as well as topical. And that is what journalists did.

The new long journalism removed a critical, structural support from the traditional, archetypal newspaper. Individual lives, in long journalism, came to be treated as examples of larger problems, and the newspaper became distanced from the individual citizen. But news that is less particular is more frustrating than cathartic. Fires end, but issues are never resolved. In the long journalism, the house across town didn't burn, instead society confronted a chronic wiring problem in its aging stock of housing.

This shift from reporting single events to creating news roundups and analyses has contributed to the widespread perception of the last twenty years that we have more problems and that they have become more intractable. It has also fed the public sense that editors report only bad news. Although it is not so much the negative events as it is the negative *meanings* that readers find oppressive, their objections have spurred on the effort to make the news at least *look* better. But cleaning up the form has only exacerbated the problem. Alternative tabloids designed in the 1970s commonly had a single story on page 1. Even the supermarket tabloids did not remain immune. The *National Enquirer* and the *Star* redesigned their front pages, and weird stories about aliens and deformed babies began to appear in neat little boxes reproduced in crisp color, an utter contradiction of form and content. Readers are not fooled by these beautification projects; their response in focus-group research has been to say that the world is not so neat and pretty.

In the 1980s some newspapers, influenced by *USA Today*, put more charts and graphs on the page, adopted color, and so on. These changes made newspapers resemble television. Editors revile *USA Today* because it joined the competition. Even its vending ma-

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chines look like TV sets. Not only its form but also its contents break with the newspaper archetype. Despite the brevity, its reporting places even greater distance between individuals and the news by subsuming them into the mass, where they participate in trends that begin with the phrase, "We're becoming more. . . . "

Something significant has happened to newspapers, and it has principally to do with the scale of things. The page itself has gotten smaller as the price of newsprint has gone up, and because of the assumptions of editors and designers, the things on the page have gotten larger and fewer. You could probably fit the contents of two or three contemporary front pages onto one front page of the *Daily Planet*.

The size of things in a newspaper expresses the fundamental definition of what is news. How "big" a story is, whether it gets on the front page or into the newspaper at all, have come to depend on its level of abstraction, on the secondary meaning that a reporter or editor can assign it. This journalism flies in the face of the broadly accepted sense of the term. To characterize any writing as journalistic places it within a tradition, bounded by the "direct presentation of facts or description of events without an attempt at interpretation," to quote Merriam-Webster. Covering events in the lives of common people, once the heart of reporting, has become a drudgery to be avoided in the new long journalism. A standard undergraduate journalism assignment is to analyze the meaning of an event, to do what professors call "making sense" of the news. The typical cub reporter wants to be a columnist—to write opinion and commentary, which is believed, rightly or wrongly, to provide the ultimate freedom from reporting ordinary news events. Reporters interview other reporters, asking for news analysis, or they all go on radio or TV to present their differing points of view. With so much going on in the world, journalists argue, readers need packaged explanations. The facts alone lack meaning. All of these changes are to the good, if newspaper editors and designers are right in their assumptions about how we use the newspaper. Are they right? I don't think so.

What is the function of a newspaper? Do people read it the way they read a book or a magazine? I doubt that any well-conceived study would show that we do. The newspaper in culture has little to do with reading and nothing to do with beauty. It is not meant to be read or admired at all but to be confronted, like the enemy. We attack it and tear it apart, write on it, and cut it up, doing socially acceptable vandalism without guilt. No other medium allows that freedom

My father was a devoted newspaper reader. When he came home from the meat market, tired and short-tempered, he looked for the paper. If it arrived late, he paced around the house, went out to look in the bushes again, and muttered and swore until the paper landed with a whop on the front step. Then he would settle into his chair and roll back the rubber band before snapping the paper flat, just so. I never saw my father read a book, but he read the paper, silently for the most part. He never exclaimed at it or said, "Listen to this," as my mother sometimes did. But he read it every day. And while he did we children would tiptoe around or go outside and wait.

I don't know what my father did when he was reading, but I don't think his purpose was to find information, to be entertained, to become a better citizen, or to pass the time. I believe he used the newspaper in another way. For twenty minutes perhaps, he glanced at stories about an Israeli military action in the Suez, a racial incident in the South, or one of Stevenson's attacks on Eisenhower, the part-time president. He might even have read a few paragraphs about traffic or hunting accidents, bad weather in Idaho, or the boy and girl gang fights on Salt Lake's west side. His own life, by comparison, must have seemed easy, or at least the news put his problems into perspective. Looking at the newspaper, he knew just how bad it could get. The tightly packed troubles on those pages acted as an emotional purging. After reading, he would roll the paper up and whack the ottoman with it, feigning anger. And then he would smile.

"People don't actually read newspapers," wrote Marshall McLuhan. "They get into them every morning like a hot bath." Research indicates that ordinary people do not read newspapers. They look at them. They scan the headlines, read a few lines here, a paragraph there. The story they read in its entirety is the exception. They come away with *NUN DIES IN FIRE; CHILDREN SAVED* and little more. Most of the news we don't need to know. Reading a news story is

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like coming upon an accident: we don't want to see it but can't stop ourselves from looking. A glance is enough. We don't want beautiful news pages. We want to marvel, yes, but also to resist. In one sense, the newspaper exerts social control by showing that crime never pays, by exposing corruption and greed. Ordinary readers can come away feeling justified and maybe a touch self-righteous, our prejudices and pretensions affirmed. Reading the newspaper can also assert individual freedom to pick and choose, ignoring what doesn't appeal to us. The newspaper is then an artifact of our birthright of freedom. Finally, the newspaper provides a means of self-control. In a society of unbridled expectations, a daily dose of news can make our burden seem lighter. It is a damper to our discontent.

It is typical of Americans to take our purgative in private and to view the act pragmatically and egotistically. We use the news like a mouthwash, the newspaper like an appliance. The value we put on the form cannot be measured in Pulitzers or design awards but in how assiduously we rip the thing apart, on how many uses we invent for it, and on how many items we clip and mail or keep taped to the fridge so long that they crumble. Anyone who has packed up to move has found pages from an old newspaper lining the bottom of the trunk or dresser drawer. The discovery is poignant. We pause to remember and to wish it were more durable before we throw it away. A newspaper is a symbol of memory. It is ubiquitous in literature and film, where it prods characters to both recollection and action. We treat our life lightly each day it arrives, we say we want it to instruct and improve us, but we are inattentive and we use it up for other things. Memories we want to preserve and cherish, but they are made of newsprint.

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MEMOIR

A Day at the St. Regis with Dame Edith

PERDITA SCHAFFNER

A family friend, a personage, visits your city for the first time. You send flowers and enclose a note. "Do let me know if there is anything I can do." You may get taken up on the offer.

My telephone rang very early one Monday morning.

"This is Edith. Osbert has been convocated. We are all alone, we are desperate."

The royal We, voice in anguish.

Edith and Osbert, the Sitwells, had been lionized from the moment they stepped down the gangplank, were installed in a luxury suite at the St. Regis, and booked for lectures and readings across the United States.

Osbert had gone away for the weekend and hadn't returned, leaving not a penny in his sister's purse. There was a bank account, but she had to go in person and sign things. Where was Wall Street, she wanted to know. And shoes, she needed shoes, her favorite pair had got mislaid. Left on the ship? Or not even packed? Unclear. Her lecture shoes—she didn't know what to do. Then we would have lunch. Afterwards we would go to the Museum of Modern Art to see Tchelitchew's *Hide and Seek*, a painting she adored.

"Oh my dear, I realize I'm battening on you, but if you could and would come to the rescue. . . ."

Of course I could and would, without delay.

It was mid-October, a steamy Indian summer day. Edith was already in the lobby, wearing voluminous robes, a scarlet turban, a heavy fur cape—and her usual array of outsize sparkling jewelry.

"So good of you, dear. Now how do we get to Wall Street—the very fastest way?"

I didn't quite see Edith on the subway. The doorman hailed a cab and helped her in, an unwieldy production in itself. The traffic was fierce, the heat unbearable. Tight squeeze in back. She sat ramrod straight, obviously ill at ease, and pulled the fur cape tighter around her.

"Driver, please, I feel a terrible draught, would you be so good as to close your window."

Nonplussed, he complied.

We picked up speed on the East River Drive.

"New York—Osbert's been here before and loves it. I'm absolutely terrified, yet it's so beautiful. Oh my passport, they said I had to bring it for official identity or something absurd—don't say I forgot."

She delved into a large drab satchel—the kind old ladies used to call "my knitting bag"—extricating cosmetics, notebooks, scribbled poems, and jewels. At the very bottom she found the comforting navy blue square British passport.

The window jolted open a mere crack, bringing a blessed waft of fresh air.

"Oh driver, Sir, I know I'm a frightful nuisance, but . . ."

"Very happy to meet you, Miss Sitwell," said the bank manager.

The Plantagenet Queen drew herself to full height, towering over him.

"*Doctor* Sitwell."

The poor man was crushed. Edith was funny that way, obsessed with titles and rank,

✪ PERDITA SCHAFFNER's essays have appeared in such publications as *Grand Street*, *Paideuma*, and the *Iowa Review*. She has written several introductory essays for the republished works of her mother, the poet H.D.

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ever desperate for recognition. She had, some years ago, received two honorary doctorates, one from the University of Leeds and one from the University of Sheffield. She clung to them. D.Litt., D.Litt. after her name, on all her correspondence, let no one forget.

The manager was subsequently forgiven his faux pas. She thanked him quite obsequiously, stuffed the new checkbook and a thick wad of cash into the "knitting bag."

We found a bigger cab this time. Another terrible draught assailed us through one of the back windows—jammed an inch open; nothing to be done about it.

Next on the agenda, shoes. The bane of her existence, Edith could never find any to fit. Suitable shoes were not comfortable, comfortable shoes not suitable. These, she pointed to the clodhoppers on her feet, were the only ones she could bear, other than the mislaid pair handmade by a little man in Rome. I directed the cab to I. Miller.

Difficult feet: narrow, long, and very bony in odd places. Boxes came out by the dozen and piled up all around. This one twisted her arches, that one pinched her big toe most excruciatingly. Another was too wide at the heel, would slip and send her pitching headfirst into the audience. Edith was extravagantly gracious and apologetic as she dispatched the salesman off on yet another foray. He tried so hard, to no avail.

Defeated, we walked a few blocks and came to a store with a glitzy window display where everything was on sale.

"Let's try here," she said.

Edith immediately spied a bin full of fake brocade bedroom slippers marked down to $3.99. Perfect fit on the very first try.

"Do you think I can possibly get away with it?"

The robes would conceal them, I assured her. Anyway, with the spotlight on her face and her voice enthralling the audience, nobody would notice her feet. She bought them.

Room service back at the St. Regis: a double martini for Edith, the size of a birdbath, she specified. She was quiet during lunch, withdrawn. Our expedition had taken a lot out of her. She was uneasy over Osbert's absence, and apprehensive about the weeks ahead. The Grand Tour: the Middle West, back through Boston, then Yale University, ending up with two major appearances in New York. Scary unknown territories, new audiences. How would they react, she wondered, would anyone even bother to come? I realized how intensely vulnerable she was, underneath the flamboyance, beyond her spectacular façade.

"We will now have a rest," she announced as the dishes were cleared away. "Make yourself comfortable."

She retired to her bedroom.

The Sitwells, the three of them—Edith, Osbert, and Sacheverell, known as Sashie—and my mother, the poet H.D., and her lifelong companion Bryher had all known each other over the years, as cordial acquaintances. The war brought about the true meeting of minds. Restless travelers grounded on our small beleaguered island. Ardent creative spirits determined to rise above the dreariness and weariness and intermittent terrors of those times. Sashie was no longer an immediate member of the triumverate. He had a life of his own, as country squire with his beautiful wife Georgia and their two sons.

"Like the uncle of a king," is how Gertrude Stein described Osbert. Patrician, infinitely kind, courteous, elegantly understated. "Very tiresome" was his only comment on a night of bombing that had nearly blown him from his home. He and Bryher became the very closest of friends. They met every morning for a walk in Hyde Park. They exchanged long letters when separated, even wrote to each other when both were in town—afterthoughts on their earlier conversation.

Edith was anything but understated. She never faced the world until late afternoon, yet she seemed ever present through telephone calls and letters. She'd finished a poem or couldn't finish it. Her throat had flared up again, her lumbago was killing her, insomnia was driving her to the brink of madness. My mother retreated from these little dramas. Bryher loved them and would go rushing off bearing cough syrup, liniment, reference books from the London Library.

If she felt up to it, Edith would come to tea—"as strong as lye," her standard order. She always descended in full regalia, turning the most informal visit into a pageant.

She thrived on vendettas. Enemies were everywhere: stupid critics, obtuse editors, importunate neophytes who thrust manuscripts at her for a first reading, coughers and sneez-

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ers who sprayed her with deadly infections. The lunatics, she called them, one and all; she lived perpetually on their fringe. Inanimate objects joined the conspiracy: a loose carpet whipping round her ankle like a dragon's tail, collapsing beds, crashing cupboards. Her imagery was vivid, highly diverting, even if one never quite knew what to believe. Some of her complaints were mostly for show, an everlasting reaction from early life. Some scars would not heal. She was an unwanted girl, followed by two desired brothers; a strange gawky child sequestered in that somber pile, Renishaw Hall. "I have a feeling we forgot something," said her father, Sir George, as they set out on a journey. "Yes, Sir," the butler replied. "We forgot Miss Edith."

Edith was always very nice to me. In turn, I was careful not to sneeze. Or to submit manuscripts—heaven forfend. She could be extraordinarily kind. She genuinely cared about people, especially about young people whose work she respected. She also burdened herself with an endless gaggle of lame ducks, most of whom sounded indistinguishable from the lunatics.

She resided at the Sesame Pioneer and Imperial Club, a Victorian enclave typical of its kind: genteel, short on capital, badly in need of repair. It offered no private bathrooms—join the queue down the hall. Frayed wicker chairs lined the lobby. The furniture in the lounge was oversized and upholstered in dark brown velvet. An unlikely venue, Edith had chosen it because she wished to be anonymous. To a degree, she was. Heads turned as she passed, then the well-bred conversations continued. She took no notice of her fellow members, nor of the shabby furniture and peeling paint. The Sesame—for short—solved the housekeeping problem and lent itself to her routine. She took early morning tea at bedside, and there she remained for most of the day, surrounded by books, notebooks, pens, and pencils. A sacroiliac condition made it painful for her to sit up at a desk; bed was always her working area. She also suffered from chronic insomnia and often woke long before the tea tray arrived, working compulsively for hours.

Sometimes she dressed and emerged for lunch, depending on her mood and the day's schedule. When work was done she liked to entertain. A very clever chef performed wonders on the dull wartime fare, the staff was amiable and willing. Edith could lay things on; she arranged lunch and dinner parties for such guests as Evelyn Waugh, T. S. Eliot, E. M. Forster, and the Nicolsons, Harold and Vita.

And she did teas—little teas, big teas. I was on the tea list. The little teas were a fearful strain. Disparate groups with nothing in common, tongue-tied; each guest was expected to take the floor and shine solo.

The big teas were great fun. Edith commandeered the brown velvet lounge. Room enough to accommodate groups and subgroups, space to move around and move on. There would be a cross section of the famous, the near famous, and those who could have been either—if only we could figure out who they were. Stephen Spender showed up in a fire fighter's uniform. Lieutenant Alec Guinness, an actor beyond spear-carrying parts, was not yet *the* actor he would become, his career postponed for a while. Edith claimed him and his wife Merula as cousins, dating her lineage from Hereward and the Wake. Osbert was invariably the co-host; sometimes Sashie, too, who was similar in appearance and manner; and occasionally Georgia, of whom it was rumored she never read a book, but was so refreshing in that galère, so beautiful, that who cared. Along with other minor acolytes, I passed plates of yellow cake and played guessing games. That peppery lady over there in animated discourse with a couple of GI's. She looked like Ivy Compton-Burnett, was she, wasn't she . . . ? Circle closer, one's instincts instructed, eavesdrop.

On one of the morning walks, Osbert told Bryher of his plan, a poetry reading to benefit the Free French in England. The Queen had agreed to be a patroness, and to attend with her then young daughters, Elizabeth and Margaret. He hoped my mother, H.D., would participate. Bryher rallied his poets. For the next few weeks no one talked of anything else. Rehearsals, tea parties, endless telephone calls. The ladies practiced their curtsies and discussed what to wear. Clothes were rationed, a new dress would use up a whole year's coupons. No problem for Edith, who would wear what she always wore. The others hunted through cupboards, mended, and made do.

Beatrice Lillie was the program seller.

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"When is she going to sing?" Princess Margaret piped up. The poets read in alphabetical order, H.D. followed by T. S. Eliot—she tremulous, he composed but dry. The first part of the program ended with John Masefield, poet laureate. Then they filed off to an anteroom to be presented to the royal party.

So far everything was very decorous, according to plan. The unforeseen would occur, however. Lady Dorothy Wellesley—former protégée of W. B. Yeats—had fortified herself with a couple of drams. She mistook Harold Nicolson for Osbert, and attacked him with an umbrella. Beatrice Lillie broke up the fight.

Vita Sackville-West, Sitwell and Sitwell, Stephen Spender, professionals all, delivered with panache. Further down the alphabet the elderly poet W. J. Turner mumbled and bumbled inaudibly, interminably, crowding scholarly Arthur Waley's slot. He had to be stopped. Lady Dorothy Wellesley had a hard time getting started. All in all a most memorable event, a lovely splash in the dark bog of 1943, when it seemed the war would go on forever.

June 6, 1944. D day at last, still a hellish long way to go. In London the worst of times since the blitz, with its abominable robots, V's 1 and 2, flying bombs and rockets, falling indiscriminately where they would, twenty-four hours a day. The V 1's sounded variously like helicopters, lawn mowers, revved-up motorboats. The V 2's were far more destructive, but descended without warning; at least we didn't have to monitor their progress across the sky. A disrupted city, inhabitants burrowing in like hysterical rabbits—just what Hitler had in mind. We went about our business as usual.

They were assembled all three, Edith, Osbert, and Sashie, at the Churchill Club, a social and cultural center for Allied officers. Osbert had read and talked of a work in progress. Edith was on stage, reading a poem inspired by the 1940 bombings, "Still Falls the Rain." We heard *it* coming, the lawn mower variety, lower and lower and louder and louder, about to tear off the roof and chop down the staircase. Nobody flinched. Edith read on, raising her voice over the racket, modulating it as the thing continued on its way. That moment, and the applause that followed, has remained one of my personal highlights of the war.

From shoes on Fifth Avenue to the firing line—quite a stretch.

Edith emerged from her room at three o'clock on the dot, rested, purposeful. We set off for the Museum of Modern Art.

We contemplated *Hide and Seek* close up, stepped back a way, and sat down, all in total silence. A disturbing picture, I thought, but I was not the one to say so. A little girl chasing a butterfly through a thicket, strange surrealist vegetation, disembodied heads.

Pavel Tchelitchew, Pavlik, was the love of Edith's life. He reciprocated, called her his muse, his sibyl, his inspiration, glass flower under glass. Separated by the war, he in America, she in England, they wrote to each other constantly. The greatest love letters of all time, it has been said, they recently have been assembled and immured in a vault at Yale University, sealed until the year 2000. He was a homosexual, however. "That of which they speak," she would lament—meaning physical passion—"I was made for it, I have never known it, I never will."

We sat on for another half hour, Edith lost and gone, looking desolate.

"Nobody paints dandelion fluff like Pavlik," she finally remarked.

I didn't know the whole story. I heard it later from other sources. Their momentous reunion had taken place at dockside. Pavlik gave a big party that night. He invited her to a private viewing early the next morning before the museum opened to the public. She was shaky from a stormy passage, disoriented; longed to see his picture, but, please, could she wait a day or two.

Tchelitchew was offended, grudgingly agreed to a later date. Confronted by the masterpiece, volatile master at her side, she couldn't think of anything to say. He waited for her ecstatic reaction. She remained silent. He sulked and smoldered. They parted company on the sidewalk.

Edith wrote him a long letter, no doubt the most eloquent of the lot. She pleaded humility. She had been overwhelmed by an experience too great for mere words, she could never do it justice. He never forgave her, a major rift set in.

So she returned with an unbiased and uninformed companion, me. Maybe she swept in there daily. Anyway, whether on the sixth or

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the second viewing, her only comment was on the dandelion fluff. We walked back to the hotel.

"Dr. Sitwell," the receptionist was well trained. "Sir Osbert has just returned."

I was graciously dismissed.

"Oh, my dear, I've battened on you, taken up your whole day, but really, I don't know what I would have done."

A pleasure, I assured her, an *honor.*

Dame Edith, Dame of the British Empire—with that ultimate accolade, the Doctor business went right out the window. It's now twenty-five years since her death, twenty since Osbert's. And quite recently, Sashie died at the age of ninety.

The year 2000 is no longer an abstraction out of science fiction. I hope I live to see it. Not for the date, per se, nor the new century, which will be as awful and marvellous as all the others, but I do want to read those love letters. Will they be the sensation of that new year, or will they be published quietly by some university press and soon forgotten? I ponder literary immortality. Many people have never even heard of the Sitwells. I remember their unremitting dedication, their high standards. I look at the long row of books on my shelf. Surely it must all count for something.

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The Hanging Gardens

DANIEL MARK EPSTEIN

"As you watched, O King, you saw a great
image. The head of the image was of fine gold,
its breast and arms of silver, its belly and
thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet
part iron and part clay. While you looked, a stone
was hewn from a mountain, not by human hands; it
struck the image on its feet of iron and clay and
shattered them."

—The Book of Daniel

Words failed him. Knowing she desired,
beyond love, the hills and forests of her youth
he toiled in his heart to tell a truth
that defies words. The King told his mason
raise bridges from nowhere to nowhere—
arch after arch with terraces cantilevered—
making his wife an Eden above the plain.

Now from the palace window she could see
an arbored garden on a floating hill
where she could stroll at will
in shade of the singing pine and lemon tree.
Yet she gazed beyond leaves at the changing moon,
troubling the King's sleep
because his labor of love was hardly done.

And so the monarch bid his mason raise
arches on the blossoming tableland—
then crisscross colonnades on the cornices

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so shadows should not drown the garden floor.
Arch upon terrace rose to the seventh level
where the Queen climbed through the jasmine air
stargazing, yet far from Heaven as before.

This was the King who put prophets in the fire
and boasted he alone built Babylon,
then found himself upon his hands and knees
grazing with oxen, banished beyond recall.
Yet Daniel, the King's captive oracle
read this dreaming tyrant well enough,
the golden head, the feet of iron and clay

and led him dream by dream to higher love.
Too late for his Queen. She heard the key
ring on the threshold of life's last archway
and could not tell a soul the miracle.
Thinking the door to happiness must lie
outside her time and space,
she climbed the seventh stairway toward the sky.

✪ DANIEL MARK EPSTEIN, writer-in-residence at Towson State University, is the author of *Spirits*, a book of poems, and *Love's Compass*, a book of essays.

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TEACHING

Robert E. Park

1864–1944

EDWARD SHILS

Robert Park was known to me well before I came to Chicago. I came to Chicago largely because of his association with it. My previous experiences in the streets of Philadelphia precipitated a state of mind which came into immediate affinity with Park as soon as I read some of his writings. I was brought up in Philadelphia. I had always been fascinated by the heterogeneity and the constancy of Philadelphia, with all its different neighborhoods and its ethnic groups, its libraries and its churches. From my tenth year until I was about sixteen, I used to go out for an expedition almost every Sunday, walking miles through the streets, looking at the different types of faces, the Italians, the Irish, the English, the Jews—mostly Russian and Polish. I walked in the city streets, imagining how their inhabitants lived, peering occasionally through front windows with undrawn blinds.

After I left the University of Pennsylvania, I spent a year in New York as an apprentice social worker, and there I learned more. I lived for a time in Brooklyn, then in the Bronx, in various nondescript areas, and finally in Morningside Heights. I spent my weekends wandering through the streets of Manhattan. I often went to the New York Public Library in the evenings. The great reading room with its disks of light on the shining tables, many of the books worn and even greasy from use, transported me, as did the Slavonic room, with its old Jews, buzzing as they read, their heads shaking forward and backward, until they fell asleep and snored and had to be awakened by the librarian. When one was aroused from his snoring doze, another one had to be tapped on the shoulder by the patient, gentle librarian in charge of the beautiful room, much smaller than the great reading rooms. The faces of the readers in the library aroused my imagination about their lives. Many of them wore poor clothing, many of them smelled of sweat, but they were earnest. I used sometimes to try to read the titles of what they were reading. They stirred fantasies of how they lived, in rooming houses in Chelsea or the East Side.

In the springtime, I used from time to time to go down to Wall Street—at about 7:30 in the evening—to walk in those deserted streets, the shadows of the tall buildings sharply defined by the sinking sun. All was silent and motionless there, except occasionally the echoing voice of a mad evangelist, calling a nonexistent audience to be washed in the blood of the lamb, or a cat running cautiously across the street.

After that I went to Chicago; my intention was to study sociology with Robert Park and to learn to see the world through his and Max Weber's eyes. But being impecunious, I had to have employment—rare enough in those days. I worked for the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare as a social worker in the Black Belt, as it was then called; I had about eight hundred families in my jurisdiction within about eight city blocks. The Black Belt, at least in its southernmost end, was in those days a benign place; its residents, who had hard lives, were good people. On Sundays,

✪ EDWARD SHILS, professor of sociology and social thought at the University of Chicago and honorary fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge, is the editor of *Minerva: A Review of Science, Learning, and Policy*.

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the churchgoers came out. I sometimes saw their clergymen, gentle, not very bright, but kind and dignified. Sometimes I would strike up a conversation with one of them. I felt an affectionate kinship with all those good people, heavily struck by the Depression, and, of course, living in the confines of their low status in white American society but solicitous toward each other, especially the women, courteous, soft-voiced, and speaking with crisp wit about the hardness of life but never losing interest in it.

All of these things might seem to be a wide digression from Robert Park. On the contrary, they were all on a straight path to him. I could not have had a better preparation for entering the world seen by Robert Park's mind.

I never attended a single class of sociology when I was an undergraduate at the University of Pennsylvania. I am not sure how I first decided to read some of the books of the University of Chicago Sociological Series of which Park was co-editor and obviously the moving spirit, but when I did, I found myself in my own experiences and memories, only more orderly, more theoretical. A book of essays, entitled *The City,* edited by Park, contained a number of his essays. It had a long, classified, annotated bibliography by Louis Wirth, full of exciting titles—the German titles fascinated me especially. I still remember one title, *Berliner Tingeltangel.*

II

In the autumn of 1933, after about a year in the Black Belt, I became a research assistant to Louis Wirth, on the basis of my ability to read German more or less easily. I studied the "Green Bible," the *Introduction to the Science of Sociology,* by Park himself and his sweet, shy collaborator Ernest Burgess. Park was still traveling in the Orient, but he appeared in the winter quarter of 1934 to give his last course, Collective Behavior, which was given in Rosenwald in a room cluttered with maps. I was a regular attendant.

Park was all that I thought a great American professor should be. Unlike what I thought German professors were, he did not speak as if he knew all there was to be known. It was clear at once that he was a "seeker," excited by the search. He was unlike a German professor in another respect: he was cleanly shaven. He was almost entirely bald; he had a thick fringe of white hair around his baldness. He was about five feet, ten inches in height, but he looked shorter because he leaned forward like a curious animal—a bear, perhaps. He was broad shouldered, deep chested. He had a deep growling voice when he spoke loudly. In conversation his voice was as low as a whisper. At least in the years I knew him, it had a wheezy tone. His speech was always slow but animated by the vision which it sought to carry.

In teaching, Park growled as he paced up and back across the front of the room. He always looked into the distance when he spoke; he spoke slowly as if he were reading out his thoughts from a distant script which he could not easily decipher. Sometimes he spoke as if from the midst of things he was talking about. He did not lecture to us; we were just present while he pondered aloud on what he had seen or was seeing while he spoke. This course must have been partly a seminar, because I remember that I delivered a paper there on the socialist and communist movements—the course gave much attention to social movements since they were forms of collective consciousness, its growth and transformations which were of major interest to Park throughout his life. My presentation was a success, and Park singled me out for special attention. That is the way he was. If a student's subject interested him, he did not limit his interest to the classroom.

That was how I came to have the privilege of walking home with him after class. He lived on Dorchester Avenue between 56th and 57th Streets in a tall, then relatively new building—it is still there. He spoke to me all the way, and sometimes he stood for a few minutes in front of the building before going in, continuing to tell of his observations and reflections.

Park spoke from time to time of consensus, of social unity such as exists in a mob with a common mood, or *Stimmung.* He thought that the mob or crowd, released from the control of institutions, manifested certain features of "emotional unity" which was the fundamental, elementary form of the life of society under more ordinary circumstances. In his idea of moral order, inchoately expounded by him and inchoately apprehended by me, he went more deeply into the fundamental substratum of the bonds which form individuals

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into societies than any other sociologist of his time or since.

Park combined this brooding reflectiveness about the basis of society with a passionate sensitivity to the humble facts of ordinary life. Harold Lasswell in *World Politics and Personal Insecurity* once wrote of Park's "respect for creative interplay between hours of high abstraction and days of patient contact with humble detail." He loved to walk the streets to watch ordinary human beings, to strike up conversations with them, to ask them questions, and to ponder on their lives. When a student did a dissertation under him, he lived in that student's subject, imposed himself on the student, went to the district or the institution where the student was doing his fieldwork, adding his own observations to those of the student. He cross-examined his students and thought aloud with them about the things he and they had observed. If a graduate student worked on an interesting subject—usually a subject suggested by Park—he interested himself unrestrainedly in the student's work. He was able to do this for several students at the same time. That is how it happened that the monographs in the University of Chicago Sociological Series were published from the dissertations which he supervised by authors who never afterward wrote anything of any interest whatsoever. He had no reservations about telling a student, "I am interested in you." He once said that to me. I wish that I had taken greater advantage of that interest.

If students faltered, Park kept after them with prodding, inquisitive kindness, and sometimes with brutality. One graduate student in the department, a Negro, had formerly been a policeman in a large city of the Northwest. His name was Horace Cayton. He had aroused the interest of one of Park's former students, Jesse Steiner, who was then teaching at the University of Washington where he was head of the department of sociology. Steiner took an interest in Cayton and sent him to work under Park for an advanced degree. He was a thick-chested, large man, of the shape which used to be characteristic of American policemen; he was also a jovial, charming person, and quite clever, and Park wanted to make something of him. Park farmed him out to Harold Gosnell, who was then in the department of political science and was writing a book on Negro politicians—later the book turned out to be a minor classic. The former policeman did much of the fieldwork, but he was not always a faithful worker. One day, having heard from Gosnell that Cayton was neglecting his duties, Park took Cayton to task for his waste of his talents. Park launched into him—then a man of about thirty-five. He started with reprimands, then began to shout at him; finally Cayton burst into tears. There the interview ended, and the crushed object of Park's censure went back to his room, much the worse for the encounter. About an hour later, Park appeared at the man's door, to cheer him up and to apologize for having spoken to him so roughly. He explained himself by saying that Cayton would benefit from the hiding he had received. "Conflict brings out what's in a man" was his final consolation to the sorry fellow. But Park never lost interest in him. Park never lost interest in his students. He was as interested in them as he was interested in their subjects.

Park was not a lucid expositor of his own ideas; he proceeded by giving hints about glimpses, but his growling ruminations about what he glimpsed were so vivid and so emphatic, so many-sided, that I understood things from him which he never said. On our frequent walks home after his class—about three-quarters of a mile from the university—I had many opportunities to hear him recalling and reflecting on what he had seen. Having been in the Orient for much of the previous year, he would tell me about what he had seen there and what it signified. Rickshaw pullers, street vendors, small shopkeepers, priests and temple custodians, gamblers—everybody and everything interested him. He wanted to set going a series of investigations into the life of society in Peking (now Beijing) such as he had instigated in Chicago. The whole world was interesting to him; he created his sociological thought to describe and explain what he had seen. There were not many American newspaper reporters and city editors in the Middle West who went to Berlin and Heidelberg to write dissertations to enable them to make theoretical sense of what they had seen as newspapermen. Park was a seeker all his life.

After his return from China, he wandered about the streets of Chicago in districts through which he had tramped in the past, observing and reflecting unceasingly. He was then about seventy years of age, a powerful

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presence, a sort of Tom Lingard. He spoke to me with horror of what he had just seen on the West Side after his return. In what was then the idiom of American sociology, he spoke to me with horrified astonishment of some of the younger inhabitants of one of those areas: "They have no norms; they have no norms at all." He did not intend to be prophetic, but he was. I said very little in response to the interesting things he told me.

Although he retired after this last course, Park continued to come to the department of sociology on most days, until about 1936, and I saw a lot of him because he came frequently into Louis Wirth's room while we were revising the translation of Karl Mannheim's *Ideologie und Utopie,* which Wirth had asked me to do. Park would come into Wirth's room several times each day when he was at the university, usually very excited about some new aspect of an old idea that had occurred to him or some "interesting" new fact he had discovered while reading or writing. He would stay for about five or ten minutes excitedly reporting his newest insight. When the excitement passed, he went back to his room. Sometimes this happened several times within an hour. He never sat down, but paced back and forth in the small room, in a lumbering ursine movement, gesticulating with both hands outstretched in front of his chest, moving up and down, as if he were measuring something. I cannot recall the things he said, but I received from those frequent interruptions a sense of Park's unquenchable wonderment and curiosity. I also came to understand why Park's writings are so incoherent. Wherever an idea came to him in the course of writing it, he transferred it to conversation, talking until he used up his stimulation. He would then go back to his manuscript and would begin again where the conversation had left off. I am not certain of this, but after seeing him in action so often in this way and reading his penetrating but discontinuous essays, this explanation seems plausible to me.

He continued to read the most miscellaneous books which seemed to bear on his interest in "the unity of the crowd," the power of the normative element in human action, the mechanisms which maintain conformity, the incessant disruptions of order in every sphere of social life. The movement to and fro of ethnic groups between assimilation and conflict was one of the subjects with which his theoretical ideas were in constant interaction.

III

Robert Park was born on February 16, 1864, in Harveyville, Pennsylvania, by the accident that his father was then serving in the Union army. After the war, the family settled in Minnesota where the senior Park became a prosperous grocer. His father wished him to continue his business, but Park wished to go to university. In 1883, he went to the University of Michigan, then the most outstanding state university in the country, bearing the influence of the German university ideal—part directly received by numerous teachers who had studied in Germany and part indirectly by teachers who had taught or studied at Johns Hopkins University. At Michigan, Park was interested in philosophy and German literature, particularly Goethe. He studied philosophy under John Dewey and absorbed a great deal from Dewey—evolutionary naturalism and German idealism. From Dewey he came to see human beings as biological organisms set in the order of nature, competing with each other within their own species, and as a species against other species; he also learned from Dewey to see these not solely as biological organisms but as members of a society, held together not only by rational calculation and contract but by common culture and common moral ideas, by a cognitive and moral consensus. These fundamental conceptions of the life of man on earth as a biological organism in an ecological order and as a human being capable of intelligent discourse, rationality, and morality, and participating in a collective self-consciousness, remained in Park's mind for the rest of his life and pervaded his outlook as a sociologist.

Upon graduation from the University of Michigan, Park became a newspaper reporter. School teaching, which he tried for a short time in his hometown of Red Wing, Minnesota, was not stimulating. The legal and clerical professions seemed to him to be, in prospect, too constraining intellectually. He chose to become a reporter, first in Minneapolis, later in Detroit and Denver, and then in New York. He returned to the Middle West to become a reporter and editor, then he came to Chicago where he continued his work as a reporter and served also as a drama critic.

The variety and poignancy of the life of great cities fascinated him. He had a curiosity

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to come into contact with the facts of human life. What appeared chaotic also seemed to exist as a pattern. He seems to have taken pleasure in feeling himself to be a sentient participant in an immense and complex organism.

He had a rich and diverse sympathy with all sorts and conditions of human beings, an aesthetic or moral pleasure in the facts of their daily existence. A pleasure in contemplating the drama and conflicts of large events existed in him, together with detachment. Everything that happened interested him; he did not respond censoriously to the things he saw. They are all part of the large process to which Dewey referred, a process whose intellectual unraveling was Park's objective then and for the rest of his life.

IV

Robert Park's years as a journalist did not diminish his fascination with the intricate multifariousness of life, but they left him dissatisfied. Journalism showed him the "many" and the "flux" of things, but it did not enable him to see the "one" in the many or to detect the constant pattern that lies under the flux! He decided to give up journalism and to study philosophy, which had been one of his main interests—with Dewey as his guide—when he was a student at the University of Michigan. He went first to Harvard; while there, he decided that he must go to Germany—as so many Americans of the last century had done in order to qualify themselves as properly trained for academic life. Park was different from the others who went in that he was rather older than the average American student in Germany and he had no definite goal of an academic career before him. It is possible that Hugo Munsterberg, who was then teaching at Harvard, helped him to make the decision, but that was not really necessary since it was the normal thing for a man with aspirations to master a branch of academic knowledge. He went first to Berlin in 1899; there he came into contact with the brilliant *Privatdozent* Georg Simmel, who was lecturing in sociology. It is uncertain what led Park to Simmel. It is possible that he knew about Simmel from the *American Journal of Sociology*, where Albion Small, as editor, had formed an advisory editorial board of eminent sociologists of the time, including Simmel. It is possible that having tried Friedrich Paulsen, who was the professor of philosophy—and a very close friend of Ferdinand Tönnies's—and found him not especially interesting, he tried Simmel as an alternative. Simmel was a very popular teacher, and Park might have heard his name and merits from other students. Whatever the mode of his coming upon Simmel, when he did so, there was an almost immediate recognition of an affinity of interest and understanding. I do not know whether he ever had a conversation with Simmel; he never mentioned to me anything as direct as that in his references to Simmel. It might be that with all his toughness as a reporter, he was shy about speaking with Simmel in his poor German. The simplicity of the notes which he took in Simmel's lectures might indicate that his comprehension of spoken German was not very good. Nevertheless, in Simmel's sociological ideas he found some of the general propositions he had been seeking: Simmel's account of social differentiation and the division of labor, of the spatial distribution of social activities and institutions and the coordination of those spatially dispersed phenomena, the prominence Simmel gave to conflict and his view of the individualizing and differentiating character of urban life, of isolation and coordination. These were some of the things that Park had been trying to grasp in his years as a journalist. That was still not enough. He never reached that point at any time in his life. He was never content with what he already knew.

By accident, he encountered a small book by a Russian, resident in Heidelberg and a friend of Max Weber. The book was *Gesellschaft und Einzelwesen*; the author was Theodor Kistiakowski. It was just the thing Park wanted. It dealt with the individual and society, a coupling of terms which has lost its meaning through latter-day superficial moral-philanthropic juxtaposition. For Park, who was always concerned with the absorption of the individual into the collective self-consciousness—the "moral order" in his later usage—the book helped to precipitate his interest, which had been accumulating over a decade of experiences as a reporter, and his philosophical studies at Harvard. Wilhelm Windelband, then professor of philosophy at Strasburg, was one of the persons to whom Kistiakowski's book was dedicated; the other

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was Simmel. Park went to Strasburg and began to write a doctoral dissertation under Windelband on a basically similar topic. When Windelband was called to Heidelberg, Park went with him. There is no evidence of any personal connection between pupil and supervisor. Windelband was a great figure in Germany in those years by virtue of his still valuable history of philosophy and his views on the similarities and differences between history and science. Park seems to have had little or no personal contact with him. He attended lectures on the European peasantry by G. F. Knapp. This was useful to him because it gave him knowledge of a mode of life very different from the life of the big cities which he knew as a journalist. It was also a good basis for his sympathetic understanding of the Negro peasants in the United States.

The dissertation was entitled *Masse und Publikum*. (It was published in 1904 and reprinted, on my suggestion, only in an English translation, nearly three-quarters of a century later.)

When he returned to the United States in 1903, he became an assistant to Royce and Munsterberg. In 1904, he met Albion Small to whom he had sent a copy of his dissertation. Small offered him a very minor post at Chicago in the department of sociology; it was only for a summer term. Park rejected it, perhaps because it did not offer the prospect of a career, perhaps because he had found academic life boring—he found Harvard that way—and too remote from the daily life of society.

Whatever his grounds for the rejection of Small's invitation, he was at loose ends. Through an accidental encounter with a missionary, he learned of the formation of the Congo Reform Association. He was offered the position of secretary of the association and accepted it. He was very active in the production and publication of articles about the Congo, but he did not like to be so closely associated with missionaries, Roman Catholic and Protestant. Nevertheless, the year of experience in the Congo Association was an enrichment of his stock of knowledge. Henceforth the expansion of European civilization into traditional and primordial societies became one of the major themes of his thought. He had to think about empires, about the transformation of primordial societies and the significance of ethnicity. His new knowledge fitted into his earlier interests and extended them. His experience in dealing with the Congo had another effect on his career. It brought him into contact with Booker Washington, and this opened his horizon to enable him to incorporate American Negroes into his earlier interests.

He was amanuensis, counselor, and press agent for Washington for about seven years. He lived in the South and came to see a new side of American society and of a world society of which he had been only dimly aware hitherto. He traveled to Europe with Washington, and he wrote *The Man Farthest Down*, a book on the European lower classes of which Washington was nominally the author and Park the real author. He helped Washington with other books, and in the course of his work with Washington became intimate with the life of the blacks of the South. It enriched his sociological understanding. That was possible only because he was entirely free from prejudice about race and color. W. I. Thomas said that he was as free from prejudice as any white man could be. When he worked for Washington nine months of the year, he left his family in New England, spending only the summer and holidays with them. Under the urging of his wife and children, he decided that his mode of life had to change. It was difficult for him to separate himself from Tuskegee Institute and from Booker Washington. Park's sympathies were inexhaustible, and they went out in full measure to Negroes, and to everyone for that matter. Although he did depart from Tuskegee—a step from which Washington tried hard to dissuade him—he never lost his interest and pleasure being among Negroes. (He spent the last nine years of his life living in Nashville, Tennessee, at Fisk University where his pupil and friend Charles Johnson was president.)

The line of succession of the phases of Park's life was, despite the vagaries of his professional career, as straight as the line of growth of his intellectual interests and accomplishments. It was a line of continuous expansion of experience and knowledge in very diverse situations, all in the service of a coherent, internally consistent, and constantly deepening understanding. His role in the Congo Reform Association brought him into touch with Booker Washington and Tuskegee Institute. These in turn brought him into

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touch with W. I. Thomas, who was then professor of sociology at the University of Chicago. He had read Thomas's writings on "folk psychology," German-Polish border relations, especially interesting to Park because of the peasantry and agricultural labor which were under discussion. Park invited Thomas to a conference he was organizing for Washington. He accepted Park's invitation. Thomas, a man of very outstanding intellectual powers, was free from prejudice about many things. (This ultimately led to his undoing.) He saw in Park another man with universal sociological curiosity and remarkably free from the prevailing ethnic prejudices, as well as one who had uncommon gifts—not yet openly visible—as a sociologist. He prevailed on Park to come to the University of Chicago.

Professionally this was the end of Park's life as a wanderer. It did not mean the end of his life as an intellectual wanderer. His career as a university teacher—and his family—might have tied him down to one place, but neither could tie down his curiosity and imagination.

V

Park began his academic career when he was nearly fifty years of age. He was kept on a narrow leash by the president of the University of Chicago, Harry Pratt Judson, William Rainey Harper's successor and very different from Harper in his parsimoniousness and self-righteousness. Judson was a political scientist who had tried to put order into the financial affairs of the University of Chicago after the disorder in which they had been left by Harper when he died in 1906. Judson was an ungenerous person who probably did not think well of Thomas for his unconventional declarations about sexual relations—it was Judson who dismissed Thomas from the University after the disclosure in the press of his act of adultery in 1919.

Park was not exactly welcomed by Judson. He was paid an annual salary of five hundred dollars for teaching a single course. This did not dampen Park's enthusiasm for teaching. He taught more than he was paid for. After several years, the president sent a statement to the department of sociology permitting him "to give a course in the winter quarter without salary." It was only in 1919 that the president agreed to raise Park's salary to one thousand dollars per annum and granted him the title of "professorial lecturer."

Park remained in that status until 1923, when he was elevated to a full professorship, following Judson's retirement. Park did not allow himself to be discouraged by the lack of sympathy in the university administration. He did not care about the money since he had inherited a large sum from his father.

He plunged into academic life with the same unquenchable curiosity as he had manifested in each of his earlier occupations. He made himself familiar with the city of Chicago, walking its streets, stopping to look at whatever interested him, speaking to whomever he pleased. He was once more a reporter, but this time he had no deadlines, and he did not have to confine himself to "digging out" facts. He could exercise his freedom of imagination. His imagination had a great deal to work on. There were the years of reporting about the life of several large cities. There were the years of preoccupation with Negroes after a year of informing himself about European expansion into Africa. There was also his old interest in the one and the many, the individual and his collectivities, rational decisions and rational actions and their intricate relations with primordially dominated decisions and primordial collectivities. He began to expand his imagination into theories in which he had always been interested.

Becoming a sociologist in a department of sociologists brought all these things together. His self-imposed responsibilities as a teacher—he always taught subjects which interested him—added a factor hitherto absent—namely, students who had already committed themselves to being interested in society or who were willing to allow themselves to be made interested by their teacher's passionate interests.

The department of sociology at the university had graduate students from the very beginning. Some of them had once begun training for the clergy, others came from families of clergymen. Many of them were already teaching at small colleges. Sociology was becoming established at state universities and liberal arts colleges, and there were opportunities for employment in those institutions. In Chicago at that time there were municipal and state institutions in which sociologists-in-training could find part-time employment which enabled them to support themselves financially

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while pursuing their graduate studies.

Chicago was the ideal place for the kind of sociological point of view developed by Thomas and Park. The doctoral dissertations reported on the research inspired by their ideas and carried out under the inquisitive, overpowering, and intensive supervision which Park gave to his students and under the gentler, less imposing but no less insistent supervision of Ernest Burgess. This combination of diligent students and brilliant and unremitting supervision produced many impressive, instructive, and illuminating monographs. These monographs, some of them published in the University of Chicago Sociological Series by the University of Chicago Press, were the realization in concrete, fragmentary form of the profound understanding of society which Robert Park offered.

Unfortunately, Park's universal curiosity and his never-relaxing wonderment did not find sufficient expression in his own writings. He was full of projects which he never succeeded in advancing. He wrote many valuable introductions to the books of his protégés, and he wrote about a dozen essays full of profound insights. But he could not quite put his vision into lasting words. His students who were formed by him and who were inspired by his vision as long as he "sat" on them, were unable to carry out his work, elaborate his ideas, systematize them, and to go on applying and extending them. For some reason, sociology attracted very few graduate students who could go on producing on their own. The authors of the classic monographs wrote very little after they left Chicago. Perhaps the times were too disheartening, perhaps sociology did not attract first-class graduate students, perhaps Park was too powerful, too unrelenting a supervisor. In any case, the "Chicago School" faded out after his departure.

VI

Robert Park was a "seeker." He was no ordinary professor; he found it difficult to sit still. Too much in the world interested him. His most frequent remark about things which he read and observed was that they were "very interesting," with accent on the first *t*. He had a sense that what interested him belonged in a larger scheme of interpretation, but the interestingness of concrete events could not always or even frequently be bound down and articulated. I had the impression that he cared more for the search for answers than for the answer itself. It was the journey, not the destination, that mattered. Perhaps that is the right attitude of a great scholar. The destination is always receding anyway. That was true of Park's theories. That is why Park's vision of society—a very profound and true one—could not be passed on easily to succeeding generations of scholars. He never succeeded in putting together his views about human ecology and his views about collective consciousness. That was a great loss.

Park read omnivorously, even up to his very last years. But he was too restless to put his profound and stirring visions and insights into orderly form; he always wanted to learn something more.

His work would have had a longer life if he had been able to draw on Max Weber's writings in *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* and the *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie*, and if he had studied and pondered Durkheim's and Mauss's writings. Robert Park worked within the same traditions, and his ideas are harmonious with theirs and would have enriched them. He was on the right track, but he was a seeker who never arrived at what he was seeking. The task remains to be done. It is worth doing.

Robert Park's writings, despite the fundamental coherence of his outlook, failed to give a sufficiently clear formulation to that coherence. Yet the coherence was there. One could not fail to apprehend it when one heard him speak in a seminar or at a lecture. That was why hearing him deliver a lecture or make a comment in a seminar or in a loose conversation during a walk was such an exhilarating intellectual experience. But to put it into systematic and precise form was another matter. Still, taken all in all, I never met anyone else who impressed me as lastingly as he did. He was a marvelous man.

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AMERICAN EDUCATION: THE COLONIAL EXPERIENCE, 1607–1783. *By Lawrence Cremin. HarperCollins. Paper, $12.95.*
AMERICAN EDUCATION: THE NATIONAL EXPERIENCE, 1783–1876. *By Lawrence Cremin. HarperCollins. Paper, $12.95.*
AMERICAN EDUCATION: THE METROPOLITAN EXPERIENCE, 1876–1980. *By Lawrence Cremin. HarperCollins. $35. Paper, $17.95.*
POPULAR EDUCATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS: THE INGLIS AND BURTON LECTURES. *By Lawrence Cremin. HarperCollins. $17.95.*

Three massive volumes aspiring to sum up the American educational experience of 373 years, presented and interpreted by one historian in an effort that stretched over nearly a quarter of a century, now weighing in with 2,076 closely printed pages—this surely is a monumental achievement reminding us of the multi-volume histories produced by nineteenth- and early twentieth-century historians. Few contemporary scholars, I dare say, would have thought it likely that we should see again such a comprehensive narrative in this age of specialized research scholarship; but Lawrence Cremin, who died this past September, has given us such a narrative in his history of American education.

Those devotees of research scholarship notwithstanding, there will be many grateful readers within and without the university who will find Lawrence Cremin's sprawling canvas inviting and rewarding. They will enjoy dipping into the text and allowing themselves to be educated vicariously, in other places, at other times, and in ways they never experienced for themselves. Some, particularly as they leaf through the most recent volume, will feel the shock of recognition as they encounter themselves, family members, friends, or acquaintances in Cremin's magnum opus.

American Education is a learned history in the traditional, narrative sense; a book that the theoretically inclined research specialist, fixated on the latest methodological innovation and school of thought, can afford to ignore; a book that will be bought, perused, and enjoyed by those lay readers and professionals who know and appreciate the fact that good history has always been, still is, and will continue to be about people and their lives.

How did *American Education* come to be written? In the spring of 1964, W. Stull Holt, Francis Keppel, and John Gardner, at that time, respectively, secretary of the American Historical Association, U.S. Commissioner of Education, and head of the Carnegie Corporation, asked Lawrence Cremin whether he was willing to undertake a comprehensive history of American education. Cremin, whose 1961 *Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education* had established him as the most exciting author in the field of American educational history, tells us that his reply was "enthusiastically affirmative."

✪ JURGEN HERBST teaches in the department of educational policy studies at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He is the author of *And Sadly Teach: Teacher Education and Professionalization in American Culture; From Crisis to Crisis: American College Government*; and *The German Historical School in American Scholarship.*

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Cremin responded as he did because he was convinced that "the traditional chronicle of American education has been narrowly institutional, full of anachronism, and painfully moralistic." It had concentrated, Cremin wrote, almost entirely on the development of public schooling. Its anachronism became apparent when one realized that its materials had been selected and viewed for their relevance to contemporary problems. Its moralism resulted in a pervasive Whiggism that linked the school's progress to the progress of the United States. None of the traditional approaches did justice to what Cremin held to be the true history of education in America.

It is only fair now to inquire whether Cremin succeeded in doing better and whether he avoided the three blemishes of narrowness, anachronism, and Whiggism. To overcome narrowness he had to discard the simplistic identification of public schooling with education. To rid himself of anachronism, he had to concentrate on the historian's task of trying to re-create for his readers the world of the past, and he had to resist the temptation of selecting and interpreting his materials exclusively from a present-day point of view. To escape the Whig fallacy, he had to free himself from a way of thinking that equated process with progress and that assumed that growth and development inevitably and ultimately improved the human condition.

There can be no doubt that Cremin succeeded magnificently in casting into outer darkness any assumption or definition that identified education with schooling. In his first volume he called education "the deliberate, systematic, and sustained effort to transmit or evoke knowledge, attitudes, values, skills, and sensibilities." As Cremin moved along in his history, this definition of education expanded. In a note to the Merle Curti Lectures of 1977, he pointed out that education included self-study as well as instruction, and he added "acquiring" to the "transmitting" and "evoking." Cremin observed that instruction could be offered by adults to other adults and to children and, as in the case of second-generation immigrants, by children to adults. Not only did schools and colleges educate, Cremin wrote, but so did "parents, peers, siblings, . . . friends, . . . families, churches, synagogues, libraries, museums, summer camps, benevolent societies, agricultural fairs, settlement houses, factories, publishers, radio stations, . . . television networks, . . . [and] occupational groups." What is more, educative institutions related to each other in configurations and interacted with society and were themselves illuminated by the study of communities. Biography, prosopography, demographic surveys, generational approaches, and national character studies also became raw material for the educational historian's analysis.

When, in 1980, the second volume appeared, Cremin made explicit that the newly added "acquisition" of knowledge, attitudes, values, skills, and sensibilities entailed that the history of education also would have to consider "any learning that results from the effort, direct or indirect, intended or unintended." Subsequently this trend stressing direct and indirect, intended and unintended results became even more encompassing. "Ethnoreligious configurations of education wrought fundamental changes," stated Cremin in the third volume. Progressive reformism played a major role "in the unprecedented expansion of the schools and colleges and in the establishment of a host of educationally oriented social service agencies." The media, libraries, museums, agriculture, industry, and the military increased their educative functions. Missionaries, businessmen, philanthropists, and government spread American educational institutions abroad. No doubt whatsoever, Cremin clearly had escaped the confines of a narrow history of schooling.

What about the anachronistic presentism that Cremin had found in the traditional accounts? Did he refrain from selecting and viewing his material with a view to explaining problems of the present? Here, too, the answer is yes. Lawrence Cremin was far too fine a historian and far too decent a human being to fall prey to the arrogance of self-appointed know-it-alls and prophets who appropriate to themselves and their purposes the richness of past historical experience. His respect for the unique lives of individuals and of peoples, their trials and triumphs, joys and pains, was far too high to allow him to consider them only for their present-day relevance.

What, finally, can we say about Cremin's success in escaping the pervading Whiggism he had deplored in the historiography of American education? Here, I am afraid, the answer is negative, for Cremin did not escape the Whiggism he deplored. His pages celebrate the persistence of an American educa-

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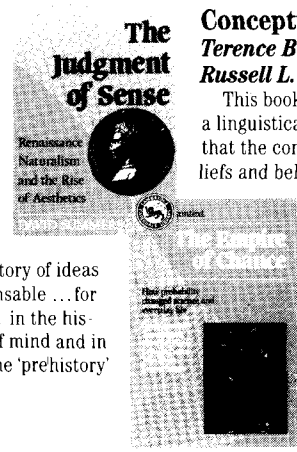

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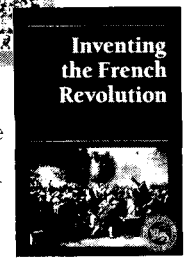

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tional *paideia*, of an American culture that has always affirmed education as the nation's central concern and activity. To be sure, this is not the celebration indulged in by previous historians who glorified as inevitable the "rise and triumph" of the public school, the conquering march of the idea and practice of administrative professionalism, or the ever-accelerating excellence of the classroom teachers' scientific training and expertise. Nor do we encounter the moralizing overtones of so much Whiggish literature. Cremin was too perceptive a scholar to deny that much is wanting and defective in the American *paideia*. But affirmation and celebration lie at the heart of Cremin's narrative canvas.

On balance—a favorite phrase of Cremin's—*American Education* emphasizes the successes and admirable aspects of the American story. Illustrations that support the upbeat theme prevail over those that do not. Cremin celebrates the spirit that gave us local control, that refused to limit education to schools, and that invested education with tasks of social and political reform extending far beyond the realm of academic learning. His generalizing terms for these and other characteristics of American education, as he saw it, are *popularization*, *multitudinousness*, and *politicization*.

By contrast, Cremin wrote little about countervailing tendencies, such as the increasing strength of state bureaucracies and nationwide lobbying and professional organizations. Eight lines of text are devoted to the index entry "National Education Association, recent period." The forces at work that press for greater uniformity, stifle diversity, or give cause to dampen the celebratory spirit are mentioned, to be sure, but rarely discussed at length. The third volume has no index entries for censorship of textbooks or for academic freedom. Schools and programs that eschew political or social reform and choose greater academic emphasis in their curricula are mentioned only in passing. Mortimer Adler's *Paideia Proposal* of 1982, for example, is not discussed in the text, although it is cited in a footnote as an example of its author's belief that it was but an extension of John Dewey's philosophy. Cremin's interpretive thesis is clear, and its Whiggish overtones unmistakable.

It has often been said that a book bears all the defects of its virtues, and this may also be said of *American Education*. Cremin's definition of education, one intended to help him stay clear of equating the history of education with the history of public schooling, is a case in point. Cremin defines education as the deliberate, systematic, and sustained effort to transmit, evoke, or acquire knowledge, attitudes, values, skills, and sensibilities, and he includes in that definition any learning that results from the effort, whether intended or unintended, direct or indirect. This definition succeeds magnificently in breaking the confines of a history of schooling, perhaps too magnificently, because now one wonders whether there are any boundaries to education at all. The question to which Cremin's efforts inevitably lead is whether anything in American life may *not* be considered educational, and, if this be so, whether and how the history of education differs from a history of American life or culture?

Cremin thought that a clear distinction exists. His definition of education, he wrote in his first volume, is not quite as encompassing as the anthropologist's "enculturation" or the sociologist's "socialization." He wanted a reader to understand that, in his view, not everything that shapes people comes under the heading of education, and that the history of education is not to be seen as a kind of all-inclusive "history in general." Yet, once historians of education concern themselves with indirect and unintended results acquired by Americans in, say, summer camps and agricultural fairs and through radio programs and advertisements, how do they differ from cultural or social historians or from students of "history in general"?

Cremin does not tell us. The closest he came to answering this question was to refer us to his statement, given in his Curti Lectures at Wisconsin, that the theoretical strength of his work may be gauged by the presence of "some intelligent conception of education." But the interactionist conception, as he calls it, does not clarify the question. It does nothing—and, to be fair to Cremin, was not intended—to circumscribe the range of phenomena the historian of education is to deal with. I, for one, find it very hard to see how in a history of education as defined by Cremin we can omit anything that touches people's lives. I am not sure just how or where one would draw a line of separation between

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Cremin's educational history and "history in general," except insofar as educational history will always have to deal with human beings and "history in general" presumably does not always. Beyond that, a clear demarcation of territory is absent.

This question about the proper scope of the history of education is made even more perplexing when one notes how little appears in Cremin's books of what one might consider the traditional subjects of the history of education, such as schoolbooks, teaching methods, school administration, the curriculum, teacher education, and teachers. While Cremin still wrote about these topics in his first volume, he very nearly omitted them in the second and third. To give but one example: Despite his evident enthusiasm for the multitudinousness of the instruments of educational transmission, Cremin finds little space for what is known as the curriculum. The word does not occur in the index of any of the three volumes. If one chooses "history" as one curricular subject and traces its discussion through the volumes, one does not fare much better. The ten pages referred to in the index of volume 1 amount to no more than simple mentions of "history" as a subject in one educational proposal or another. In the second volume, eight references are made to proposals for the study of history and four to the appearance of history in schools and colleges. Of the latter, only one amounts to more than a one-line mention. The index of volume 3 finally omits "history" altogether, though there is a half-page discussion of the transformation of history, geography, and civics into the social studies. Readers who continue to search will be better served if they rely on the bibliographical essays that, in the sections marked "Institutions," will at least point to other works dealing with such subjects as schools, schoolbooks, teachers, and curricula.

The crux of the matter is that Cremin's history of education is, in fact, a cultural history of the American nation. (We can leave aside now Cremin's own disparaging reference to "history in general"—it is a term without meaning anyway.) Enculturation and socialization are allowed to enter after all, and education is assigned a central place in these processes. Cremin uses education as a device to hold together the various elements of his story—and a well-chosen device it is. Education, after all, *is* central to any nation's or society's history. That which a people choose to offer to their children is what they value most highly in their collective inheritance. That which they transmit daily and unthinkingly to their contemporaries and successors allows us to take the measure of their worth. Thus Cremin is right. Both intentional and unintentional teaching and learning create and preserve a nation's culture. Taken to its most comprehensive extent, a nation's educational history is a nation's cultural history. The question that leaves me baffled is why Cremin demonstrates that proposition in every chapter of his work and yet refrains from affirming it when given the chance.

But let us return to what Cremin called his "interactionist conception" of education on which, as he wrote, the theoretical strength of his work rests. A history of education, Cremin indicated, should not be judged by the subjects covered but by the presence of "some intelligent conception of education itself," which would assure an "intelligent conception of the history of education." The interactionist conception of education views "education as purposeful, the conception of the configuration as a patterning of institutions, the view of personality as a biosocial emergence, and the idea of the educative process as a continuum of contemporaneous and successive transactions." It does not, as already pointed out, help define the field of educational history, but it does ask us to understand the education of individuals as embedded in an institutional matrix and as a process conducted with a purpose that extends across generations.

For the United States, Cremin holds, this educational process constitutes its *paideia,* its culture. Because this American *paideia* is enshrined in the nation's ways of education and faith in it, Cremin challenges American historians to move the study of educational institutions and traditions to center stage. To study America, he appears to say, study its education. By looking at what Americans teach their children and at what their children learn in schools and out of them, one learns what America is all about. Reading Cremin's volumes with these assumptions in mind, one will find throughout that the kaleidoscopic quality of presentation, the constant search for the telling characterization, and the celebra-

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tion of American diversity build up gradually and irreversibly a compelling sense of an American educational identity. More precisely, one comes to realize that it is Cremin's contention that Americans have shaped their identity through a receptivity to education in all its forms.

Cremin does not merely leave us with this rather general and all-encompassing definition of *paideia*; he defines it more precisely as characterized by popularization, multitudinousness, and politicization. By *popularization* Cremin means "the tendency to make education widely available in forms that are increasingly accessible to diverse peoples." *Multitudinousness* refers to "the proliferation and multiplication of institutions to provide that wide availability and that increasing accessibility." And *politicization* describes "the effort to solve certain social problems indirectly through education instead of directly through politics." Cremin envisions these three terms as particularly descriptive of the American *paideia*. None of them, he writes, "has been uniquely American . . . yet the three in tandem have marked American education uniquely."

With that statement Cremin has revived the once heated debate over whether the American experience diverges from that of Europe in any fundamental way. In the context of *American Education*, this may be asking for more than Cremin could deliver; yet his assertion of American uniqueness nonetheless means that his thesis will have to be tested with comparative studies of educational histories outside the United States. The same demand should be raised when one wants seriously to evaluate the excellence or failure of American education. Conversely one should point out that the presence of Cremin's massive historical account should now forestall any repetition of such superficial and ill-informed reports as *The Nation at Risk*, which was written with little regard for America's educational legacy. Cremin's well-grounded appreciation of our own educational past has given us a platform from which we may set out to view ourselves in comparative perspective without falling prey to self-flagellation or hyperbole.

By arguing that he finds in America's commitment to education the essence of American uniqueness, Cremin focuses attention on the mixture of record and anticipation or of accomplishments and myths that makes up the American *paideia*. In Cremin's volumes this mixture of reality and vision becomes the heart of the story. America's educational heritage feeds a sense of purpose that, as a culture's linchpin, turns education into "a vision of life itself as a deliberate cultural and ethical aspiration." Here we begin to hear echoes of Horace Mann's belief that past, present, and future generations constitute one great commonwealth and that their commitment to continuing education created their common heritage. While reading Cremin, one is caught up in a sense of obligation of what we in the present owe to those in the past for both their achievements and their shortcomings, the ones to cherish, the others to rectify. Through education, Cremin testifies, we have become a nation. That is the meaning of his popularization, multitudinousness, and politicization.

At this point, Cremin's celebratory voice allows his vision to blend with reality and very nearly to take its place. Referring to the colonial experience, for example, Cremin writes that "the diurnal life of the community became educative." I don't think one misconstrues Cremin's interpretive approach when one recognizes the educative character of daily life as the vision, while the legislative provisions for schooling are part of the reality. But in the absence of clear distinctions between vision and reality it becomes difficult to distinguish fancy from fact or program from accomplishment. One also wonders again how even an "intelligent conception of education" could possibly keep the text within bounds and save it from becoming an all-inclusive cultural history.

This blending of vision and reality also makes one wonder to what extent the three aspects of Cremin's *paideia*—popularization, multitudinousness, and politicization—were part of vision or reality throughout America's history. There remains little doubt that Cremin's description of schooling in volume 1 calls up images of popularization and multitudinousness and that he intends to describe reality. Schooling, he writes,

> went on anywhere and everywhere, not only in schoolrooms, but in kitchens, manses, churches, meetinghouses, sheds erected in fields, and shops erected in towns; . . . pupils were taught by anyone

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and everyone, not only by schoolmasters, but by parents, tutors, clergymen, lay readers, precentors, physicians, lawyers, artisans, and shopkeepers; and . . . most teaching proceeded on an individual basis.

Politicization, too, is presented as an aspect of reality. Cremin makes this clear when he writes of "public concernment" that viewed schooling as a "device for promoting uniformity, . . . put to the purposes of the controlling elements of society."

What is striking throughout Cremin's three volumes is how much more readily and enthusiastically he writes about popularization and multitudinousness and how, as one moves through the volumes, one reads less about politicization, particularly when it enters through legislative and other governmental action. To be sure, as Cremin discusses the Revolution and its meaning for colonial society, he again mentions "public concernment." Given the task of creating a government for the new republic, the revolutionary generation could not but realize the convergence of education and politics in what he calls the "act of creative statesmanship." Quite obviously, Cremin views this creative statesmanship as an aspect of reality. But the educational function of the lawgiver, of necessity a unifying, homogenizing act, then was overshadowed by popularization.

Popularization, writes Cremin, "with respect to access, substance, and control became early and decisively the single most characteristic commitment of American education." In the popularized and popularizing aspects of education Cremin sees both the boon and the bane of American education. They led him to stress its visionary aspects and to acknowledge its unfinished character and unpredictable outcome.

At its best, [the American commitment to popular education] moved men to dream impossible dreams and then set out to realize them; but, at its worst, it filled them with unfulfillable hopes that could only be answered in some other, more perfect world. In short, for all its nobility, it led men inexorably to the brink of hubris, and then tempted them beyond with visions of the true, the good, and the beautiful.

Vision reigns on the side of popularization; reality characterizes politicization.

In the second volume of *American Education*, the theme of the interplay between multitudinousness and politicization continues. Cremin writes that improvisation, imitation, and trial and error characterized the development of schools and colleges during the first half of the nineteenth century. Because they had been fueled by popular initiatives, the results were, predictably, marked by variety. Swept up by the political process, they were then fused into state and even nationwide systems. "What was fresh in the republican style," Cremin writes, "was the emphasis on system, on a functional organization of individual schools and colleges that put them into regular relationship with one another and with the polity." Horace Mann's public-school revival in Massachusetts, repeated in state after state, and the Morrill Act of 1862 laid down the base lines of the system.

But Cremin cannot bring himself to admit governmental action as a means of politicization to equal standing. Toward the end of the volume, one reads: "Popularization and multitudinousness, in tandem, were the distinguishing features of American education during the nineteenth century." Politicization, viewed earlier as a unifying factor, is not mentioned. The fruits of popular education—literacy, skills, attitudes, sensibilities—were "on balance," Cremin writes, "in the direction of increasing diversity and choice." Cremin concedes that was not necessarily all to the good. Education could be used for demeaning and coercive purposes; it did not "augment liberty for slaves or for Indians . . . but these omissions [and others Cremin cites but I leave out here] must not obscure the extension of opportunity for others." "On balance"—that phrase again—education augmented personal liberty and advanced equality "at least in the sense in which that term was used during the nineteenth century." That sense, visionary as it was, did not always square with reality.

When Cremin discusses the era of the Civil War, his view of politicization as a unifying force, substituting education for politics, encounters temporary difficulties. It is weakened for a time as the American *paideia* "was variously perceived and applied by different segments of the population in different regions of the country." Cremin asserts that Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* "had contributed to the consciousness of separatism that ultimately led to war." The interplay of education and politics, he argues, now

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increased the consciousness of differences and "did so at the expense of what remained of a common American *paideia*." Still, Cremin continues, a common *paideia* never entirely disappeared. In fact, it was helped to new prominence by another revival of public schooling spearheaded by such schoolmen as William T. Harris. "These men were as aware as any previous generation that families, churches, libraries, and indeed the entire apparatus of civic institutions, educate; but, unlike previous generations, they were willing to stake the nation's future primarily on its schools and colleges." In the third volume Cremin thus notes "the increasing significance of schools and colleges and of the media of popular communication."

Yet in Cremin's American *paideia*, the forces of popularization and multitudinousness ultimately persist and triumph. He notes that just as the metaphor of the "melting pot" began to give way to that of the "mosaic," alternative *paideias* of various ethno-religious groups began to compete with the common American *paideia*. If commentators had been afraid that "big government," an all-powerful media establishment, and homogenized schools would create a mass mind, Cremin tells them not to worry. "What was taught was not always what was learned," and "what was learned frequently had nothing to do with anything that was taught but rather with what a particular individual set out to study for his or her own purposes." Add to this that an increasing politicization of education meant an increasing number of didactic voices seeking to propagate their messages throughout the schools, and Cremin convinces himself that the specter of a homogenized, uniform educational experience for all Americans is simply unreal. He appears to say that in the twentieth century politicization's unifying force fades away. "The more education became a form of politics and even a substitute for politics, the more the clash of orthodoxies was likely to remain a recurrent phenomenon on the American educational scene." Politicization spoke with many voices and ranged itself together with popularization and multitudinousness on the side of the divergent tendencies, all advancing liberty and choice. Once more, an encouraging vision triumphed over a darker reality.

While that persistence of vision over reality remained Cremin's sustaining affirmation and gives his three books their Whiggish overtones, his historical scholarship permitted him to escape the pervasive moralism that vitiates so much of Whiggish writing. It allowed him readily to admit "the persistent inequalities in access to schooling" and to concede "that the same school could convey messages of encouragement to some children and messages of discouragement to others." He was also fully aware that, for better or worse, most Americans today receive their common education through public schooling and television. Though "increasingly standardized . . . schooling" provides "one important foundation of common language, common knowledge, and common values," it does not overcome the difference that exists between what is taught and what is lived, between vision and reality. That difference, Cremin reminds us, is the American problem. It is real, and it persists. Television furnishes Americans "with a common set of secular symbols, secular discourse, and indeed secular sacraments." Cremin calls it superficial and evanescent. "It taught the substance and values of a consumer culture Tocqueville had feared individualism might bring into being in the United States; and it conveyed that culture in a new language for which the public had not yet learned or been taught a critical literacy."

Thus, while Cremin wondered whether the processes and opportunities of public education "would prove sufficient to the need," he nonetheless maintained that "American education in the large contributed in multifarious and frequently contradictory ways to the delicate balance of liberty, equality, and comity that continued to mark the American ethic during the twentieth century." Cremin's belief is "that schooling tended to broaden the vistas of students beyond those of households and neighborhoods." In his closing paragraph he turns to Margaret Mead for confirmation of his optimism and finds it in her statement that the American *paideia* would have to be made trans-national to include "diverse people at every stage in the development of every significant activity." Again, his mind turns from reality to vision.

What, then, are we to make of Cremin's American *paideia*? At heart, I believe, it is an "urban democrat's" testament of faith. Lest

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there be any doubt about it, New York was Cremin's metropolis, and in the final volume it comes to stand for America. We all have seen the Steinberg drawing purporting to be a New Yorker's view of the United States. I am reminded of it when I read Cremin's history of the post–Civil War period. True, America turned urban in those decades, but besides never discarding a rural heritage, America also breathed in St. Louis, Chicago, New Orleans, and San Francisco, cities that never were carbon copies of New York. True, New York and other large cities developed a culture of their own with museums, newspapers, theaters, and municipal colleges; but rural America also knew an educational culture of its own with its consolidated high schools, normal schools, and teachers colleges, 4-H clubs, and agricultural extension agents. For all the lives touched by New York as portrayed by Cremin, there were those others who crowd the pages of Willa Cather, Ole Edvart Rölvaag, and Hamlin Garland. Cremin does mention the other America outside New York, but it does not come to life in his pages as do the people, streets, and institutions of his beloved metropolis.

It strikes me as ironic, too, that, with all of Cremin's emphasis on vision and aspiration and his apparent distrust of the homogenizing politicization he had found in his first two volumes, he ignored altogether the most evident contemporary manifestations of that vision and of that rejection of homogenization. I have in mind the protests and rebellions that erupted in schools and colleges during the sixties and have recently resurfaced in the erstwhile socialist societies in central and eastern Europe. One need not have agreed with every demand and every action that marked those upheavals, nor can one ignore the crucial differences between the systematic and systemic use of terror and violence by communist regimes in Prague and Warsaw and the reaction of police forces on the streets of Berkeley and Chicago. But how can one fail to notice the significant extent to which the students' actions in 1968 and 1989 were inspired by vision and aspiration, idealism and hope? Even from a strictly "realistic" point of view, how can a historian of education afford to ignore events that have so materially affected schools and universities and that continue to affect the course of history at home and abroad?

This, let me add, is not a matter of a "liberal" or "democratic" versus a "radical" interpretation. Even before Cremin began writing his three volumes, historians of no particular radical bent had already described the growth of an administrative professionalism as a threat to spontaneity, idealism, and vision in education. Others commented on the new "science of education" and its disciples' love affair with a "one-best system," and traced the results in the rise of testing, school surveys, performance contracting, behavioral conditioning, or planning, programming, and budgeting systems. But Cremin has little to say about that in his book. There are no index entries for testing, SAT's, or the Educational Testing Service—household words for literally thousands of Americans. Just when in the United States the homogenizing and stultifying effects of politicization achieved new heights in the administrative bureaucracies of public school and higher education systems, Cremin thought their very vastness allowed students to escape their influence. He also avoided any extended discussion of the various strands of rebellion that eventually coalesced to shake educational institutions from Berkeley to New York and from Berlin to Tokyo. Cremin—the New York democrat—found no room for these matters in his book.

This omission is stranger still when one considers Cremin's final reference to the idea of the trans-national *paideia*, a concept he borrowed from John Dewey and Margaret Mead. Mead had spoken of the need to include "diverse people at every stage in the development of every significant activity." Why, one wonders, did Cremin ignore the reality of his vision? Was it because his vision derived its inspiration so single-mindedly from New York?

For a final word and evaluation of Cremin's *paideia*, let me return to his text where he comments on Alexis de Tocqueville, a writer who, like Cremin himself, wrote with insight, grace, and persistence on the American *paideia*. Both men found that their topic caught them in the double pull of vision and reality. *Paideia*, after all, is both, and both will have to be recorded. If that is an impossible task, both men refused to be daunted by it. As a result neither could escape both praise and blame. They nonetheless persisted in their task, and

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each left us a monumental and memorable bequest.

Cremin wrote of the Frenchman:

> Tocqueville had his blindspots, about education as about much else. He generalized about the family from the more genteel segments of the middle class. . . . He generalized about political participation from a traditional New England township model. . . . And he drew his generalizations about Americans as individuals from white males, whatever the disclaimers—and the conflicting evidence—in his chapters on women, blacks, and Indians. Finally, . . . [he] continually confused a democratic ideal that he saw coming into being with an American reality that he insisted he was observing.

Mutatis mutandis we can say that of Cremin himself. If those words sound too negative, note that they are followed by these:

> Yet, all such qualifications notwithstanding, the young Frenchman did capture the central tendencies of American education. Others may have presented the details more fully and more accurately; Tocqueville, more than any contemporary, grasped the whole.

I should like to rephrase that last sentence so that it may now apply to the author of *American Education*: Others may have presented the reality more fully and more accurately; Cremin, more than any contemporary, grasped the vision.

Soul Train

THE GODWINS AND THE SHELLEYS: THE BIOGRAPHY OF A FAMILY. *By William St. Clair. Norton. $32.50.*

Reviewed by JOHN P. SISK

As father-in-law of the poet Shelley, father of the author of *Frankenstein,* husband of the author of *Vindication of the Rights of Women,* and author himself of *An Inquiry Concerning Political Justice,* William Godwin is a tantalizing but too easily forgettable presence: a prose propagandist in an age remembered for its poetry. One learns that *Political Justice* influenced the thinking of such memorable people as Shelley, Wordsworth, Keats, Coleridge, Lamb, Southey, Hazlitt, and Byron, but few students of the period do anything more than sample the book, if they do that. We learn now from William St. Clair's handsome biography that Godwin was one of the most published and best read men of his time, but that information is not likely to call forth a new edition of his masterwork. Indeed, few books are less able now to convey the excitement with which they were written.

The important thing, however, is that for biographical purposes Godwin lived his eighty years at the right time, was involved with the right people, and got into the right kinds of trouble. "A late survivor from the puritan period," St. Clair writes, "he had passed through his own accelerated age of enlightenment, taking it to new heights. He had been in at the start of romanticism, and had outlived its end. Now he was on the threshold of the Victorian era." His life had been a cultural history of his times, and they had been, as his friend Tom Paine had put it in another context, times that try men's souls.

Godwin began life as the son of a minister in a strict Calvinist environment and was himself educated for the ministry. However, his early determination "to follow truth wherever she leads" soon led to his encounter with the irreligious French *philosophes* and to the soul-trying that led him through agnosticism to a positive atheism (in later years, under Coleridge's influence, moderated to theism). So de-Christianized, he migrated to London and Grub Street where he survived by means of an immense amount of mainly anonymous writing, much of it reflecting his sympathy with the Jacobin spirit in France. In the fall of 1791, when the news from France was most unsettling to the English, he began *Political Justice* and finished it after two years of intense work. Its combination of secular necessitarianism, utilitarianism, and enlightenment perfectibilism made it a natural target for the anti-Jacobinism with which England responded to the growing violence of the French Revolution (visitors to the British Museum in the summer of 1989 were able to relive this reaction in the splendid exhibition "Shadow of the Guillotine"). Subsequent edi-

✪ JOHN P. SISK, Arnold Professor of the Humanities Emeritus at Gonzaga University, is the author of, most recently, *The Tyrannies of Virtue.* His essays and reviews have appeared in *Harper's,* the *Atlantic,* and other magazines.

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tions of the book appeared in 1796 and 1798, both of which reflected the influence of critics and a continuing moderation of the author's enlightenment optimism. Among other things, Godwin gave up his dim view of marriage as a person-diminishing form of monopoly and his conviction that perfectibility would ultimately lead to earthly immortality.

At this point Godwin had four decades of productive work in front of him. He wrote successful novels (*Caleb Williams*, *St. Leon*, and *Fleetwood* were popular extensions of his leading ideas), textbooks and childrens books, advice books, polemical responses to soul-trying issues, histories, and biographies, including a life of Chaucer in which he displayed an almost Burkean sympathy for medieval cultural and political arrangements. Like Henry James, he even tried to write for the stage, and like James he failed. Given the conditions of his life, the sheer bulk of his output is astonishing.

Nothing affected these conditions more than his meeting with Mary Wollstonecraft, already well established at the time as a writer, especially for the highly controversial *Vindication of the Rights of Women* (the subject of an excellent appendix that locates it in the tradition of late-eighteenth-century advice books for women). Their first meeting, at a dinner party, was memorable less because Godwin found her immediately interesting than because she distracted him from paying attention to another guest, Tom Paine. Soon they were lovers, and when she became pregnant he married her, in the act becoming stepfather to Fanny, the offspring of Mary's earlier affair with Gilbert Imlay. It was a utilitarian but not comfortable decision for him, committed as his New Philosophy was to the conviction that marriage is the "most odious of all monopolies." But if he had not made it he might not so soon have discovered the impoverishing abstractness of much of his New Philosophy, nor would he have been in a position a year later to publish his sensationally revealing *Memoirs of the Author of the Vindication of the Rights of Women* and so establish himself as a pioneer in the art of modern biography.

Godwin's second excursion in the monopoly of marriage (after Mary had died giving birth to Shelley's future wife) was with Mary Jane Clairmont. She at the time was pregnant with the second William Godwin and already

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had had two illegitimate children. So by 1802 Godwin, who in 1797 had been a bachelor and probably a virgin, had five children all under the age of eight. "Four of the five," says St. Clair, "had either Godwin or Mary Jane as a natural parent, but no two of them had the same father and same mother."

Times were hard and would continue to be until in his last years the Whig government made Godwin a pensioner with minimal duties at two hundred pounds a year. Because he could not with his pen provide for this mixed brood, he opened a bookstore and became a businessman in a society not conspicuous for the practice of political justice. By 1812, halfway through the book, when he was facing bankruptcy, the poet Shelley appeared on the scene and precipitated the events with which students of romanticism are more familiar.

The coming together of philosopher and poet (at the poet's request) is rich with ironies superbly presented by St. Clair. Shelley, as his poem *Queen Mab* indicates, had made the first edition of *Political Justice* his bible. However, the Godwin Shelley met "was now himself far less Godwinian than his pupil." The discovery of the imagination had helped to temper his enlightenment rationalism. "He was more experienced, more doubting, more patient," writes St. Clair. In any event, Shelley was persuaded to the hypocritical compromise of marriage with Harriet Westbrook (the first of his several soul mates), who in the dedication of *Queen Mab* is "the inspiration of my song." Later, as we know, he abandoned her and their two children and ran off to the Continent with Mary Godwin, taking along Clair Clairmont, who was ultimately to have her affair with Byron and give birth to Allegra, to whom Byron always referred as "the bastard." After Harriet had drowned herself and Mary was pregnant for the third time, Shelley, to Godwin's immense relief, compromised his Godwinian principles once more and married the woman. To satisfy the church, false declarations had to be made (as had been the case with Godwin's second marriage) and again honesty gave way to utility. Little did they know that they were setting themselves up for Matthew Arnold's famous exclamation: "What a set! what a world!"

In her editorial note to *Queen Mab* the widowed Mary Shelley said of her drowned husband that he was "like a spirit from another sphere," had "the purest habits in morals," and was conspicuously unworldly. Had Godwin been alive to read this he would hardly have agreed. To him Shelley, the unmoderated Godwinian, was a sore trial: unpredictable and flagrantly irresponsible, "a spoiled young man of aristocratic tastes who treated people and ideas like an endless supply of colourful toys." Even the financial assistance he expected from his unworldly son-in-law (himself forced continually to borrow against expectations of great wealth) fell far short of expectation and need. When Godwin measured Shelley's assistance against the claims of politic justice and the New Philosophy, it was not only insufficient but often duplicitously given. Shelley's excursion into Irish politics disgusted him; it could only "widen the breach between the kingdoms." Unlike Friedrich Engels and the early Marxists, he did not like *Queen Mab*: it was an example of the false taste and superficial glitter he abhorred in many contemporary poets. Nevertheless, as St. Clair points out, *Queen Mab* and the later poems "did as much as Godwin's prose to spread his ideas."

Caught as he so often was between the imperatives of sincerity and utility, Godwin could himself be a trial to others. As St. Clair puts it, he was one of those people who have "an unshakable confidence in their own abilities and an absolute refusal to be thought less than any man in the three kingdoms." Never ceasing to be a puritan, he as often suggests dissenting verbalizers like Cotton Mather in one direction as he does G. B. Shaw in another, and like them, too, he was always the didacticist. Even his perfectibilism had its roots in the Calvinist predestination he began with. His puritan's scorn for what he called the "factitious rules of decorum" had its orthographic counterpart in his ruthless elimination of useless consonants in proper names.

In all matters, says St. Clair, Godwin was more noted for persistence than sparkle. He rarely smiled and disliked conversation that was without purpose. His ambition and certainty about his own worth combined with his theories about sincerity and political justice to make him often seem to be ludicrously tactless. Constantly beholden to others for loans and other favors, he had to react as though he were getting not benevolent handouts but his due as a genius and public benefactor.

"As each year advanced," St. Clair writes, "Godwin became more deliberate, more pre-

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cise, more dogmatic, less tolerant, more ungracious, more unfair." Twice Mary Jane could take no more of him and left for short periods. But he was himself sorely tried in those anti-Jacobin times by constant money problems, the falling away or death of friends, the suicide of his beloved stepdaughter Fanny Imlay, and the irregularities of Clair Clairmont's life. The Shelleys were constant reminders to him that the New Philosophy had proven to be as much hair shirt as liberator. And then there were his physical problems: constipation, cataleptic fits, and the narcolepsy that was likely to make him fall asleep at embarrassing moments. Had he been less an obdurate puritan, he might have resorted to laudanum, like his friend Coleridge whose disarray scandalized him. But above all he needed to keep control, so in the interest of maintaining a stoical calm, his therapy of choice was the reading of Seneca. In the latter's essay "On Firmness" he no doubt read more than once that "the wise man is not subject to any injury. It does not matter, therefore, how many darts are hurled against him, since none can pierce him." If he did not entirely believe this (the darts had pierced him too often and too painfully), still the resoluteness with which he kept doing what it seemed to him had to be done marks him as a truly remarkable man.

The biographer, of course, has a problem with firmness: he must resist the temptation to flinch from the truth lest its darts give pains to others. The early Godwin had no doubt that total honesty in biography, as in all other matters, was necessary if new generations were to learn from their predecessors. But then, says St. Clair, he had to live with the fact that his *Memoirs of the Author of the Vindication of the Rights of Women* "had done untold damage to two generations of his family without as yet bringing about any noticeable benefit." Thus as his New Philosophy continued to be pierced by the darts of pragmatism and utility, his views on biographical sincerity changed and he came to believe "that for biographies which mention the living some dilution was required."

Since all his characters are long dead, St. Clair does not have Godwin's problem. Having, like Godwin, done his homework assiduously, he is able to give us what Godwin aimed at in his life of Chaucer: the illusion of knowing his subject personally in his time

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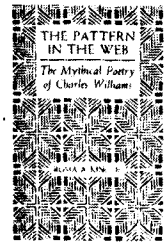

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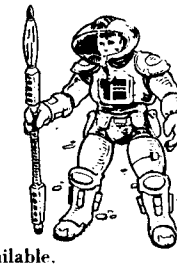

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and place, but with a grace and humor that Godwin could never command. We even get in an appendix Godwin's secret record of his sexual relations with Mary Wollstonecraft. No doubt Godwin would have preferred some dilution here, but given the importance of that brief time with Mary to his subsequent life, most readers will probably applaud the decision not to dilute.

The important thing here and throughout the book is that William St. Clair does not strain to sensationalize material that is sensational enough when honestly presented. He gives impressive order to a vast amount of archival information and a huge cast of characters in the interest of answering one question: What was it like to be William Godwin in those eighty soul-trying years? I suspect that the answer will leave some readers with an unanticipated sympathy for Godwin and his New Philosophy—perhaps even to the point where they agree with St. Clair (Godwin himself never doubted it) that, in the eye of history, all his mistakes were on the right side. Those who can't go this far, being themselves sorely tried by the consequences of some of those mistakes, may at least be stimulated to return to Seneca and his epigones in an effort to avoid the darts hurled against them by still newer philosophies.

Bit Part

PAUL ROBESON: A BIOGRAPHY. *By Martin Bauml Duberman. Knopf. $24.95.*

Reviewed by JOHN C. CHALBERG

Near the end of this long biography, a weary W. E. B. DuBois is revived in time to offer the last word on the life of his friend and ally, Paul Robeson: "The only thing wrong with Robeson is in having too much faith in human beings." After hundreds of interviews and thousands of footnotes, an even wearier Martin Bauml Duberman can do little more than offer his groggy assent. "Poor brother Paul," might read the DuBois-Duberman-inspired epitaph, "he done his damndest; he just trusted too much."

And in what or whom did this large man place his trust? Often in communism and individual Communists, though a coy Duberman hesitates to establish exact connections among the parties in question. Instead, Duberman prefers to emphasize Robeson's "idealism" when discussing his subject's affinity for his ideological homeland, while conceding that Robeson never expressed any public doubts about either the Soviet Union or his decision to embrace it. And privately? At least in the judgment of this biographer, there was no private Paul Robeson.

Was Paul Robeson's actor's mask always in place? Had he mastered his role so thoroughly that he could never depart from it? Away from stage and screen there were two roles, though Robeson never played them in repertory. From his undergraduate years at Rutgers until his epiphany during the mid-1930s, Paul Robeson played the part of the earnest achiever. This Robeson was a determined young man: determined to emulate his preacher father's "largeness of spirit"; determined not to be overwhelmed with bitterness for any number of infuriating racial slights; determined to go well beyond survival on the gridiron and in the courtroom; determined to employ art as a "solvent for racism"; determined to live the sophisticated good life in Europe and America.

The politicized Paul Robeson of the mid-1930s and beyond was his second and, as it turned out, permanent role. This Robeson was the selectively angry Robeson, angry at himself for having followed his father's advice and angry at the country of his birth for its numbing racism. But this Robeson was in his own way also a determined Robeson: determined now to sacrifice art to politics; determined to defend the Soviet Union at every turn; determined to live out his days as a self-certified victim of both American racism and American political orthodoxy.

But was it really an act? No. The Paul Robeson of any era and any place was too guileless and too trusting for that. Whether apolitical or highly political, the private Robeson and the public Robeson were essentially one and the same man.

Whether on stage or off, Paul Robeson was always playing Paul Robeson. An actor of limited capacity, he was, in Duberman's view,

JOHN C. CHALBERG teaches American history at Normandale Community College in Bloomington, Minnesota.

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unable to "inhabit a variety of characters foreign to his being." His Othello was Robeson the dogged romantic; his Toussaint (in *Black Majesty*) was Robeson the black rebel; his Joe (in *Show Boat*) was Robeson the lovable darkie; his Chief Bosambo (in *Sanders of the River*) was Robeson the splendid physical specimen; and his Brutus Jones (in *The Emperor Jones*) was Robeson the innocent victim.

It was this last role that Robeson would play to the hilt and at the command of directors of both theatrical and political persuasions. For his part, Duberman has done little more than attempt to restore Robeson's by now somewhat tattered claim to victim status. The story is an old one. Paul Robeson—football star, ambitious lawyer, budding actor, and singing phenomenon—was really Paul Robeson in dress rehearsal for his ultimate role and permanent career as celebrity victim.

Here was a young man who had had it all: brains, looks, and talent. Here was a black American who could have been rich and famous and popular without having had to sell out in the process. Instead, Paul Robeson became a black American who was hounded and then quarantined by his government, stereotyped and then shunned by the entertainment establishment, embraced and then used by another country and another ideology.

Of course, the final "and then" is not included in the official party line on Robeson. Instead that line goes like this: here was a man whose career was destroyed because of his political beliefs, destroyed simply because he chose to challenge American racism. And this is the line that Martin Duberman has chosen to pursue in his lengthy biography.

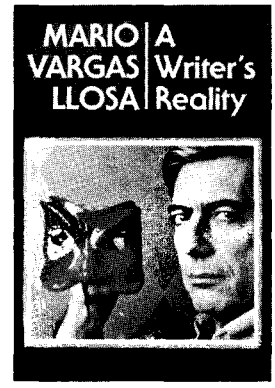
For Paul Robeson to play out his role as victim was one thing. For Duberman to perpetuate it is quite another. Robeson was not a very complicated man. But his story (and, therefore, his historical significance) is more complicated than Duberman makes it out to be.

Robeson was a man of genuine intelligence and some theatrical ability. More than that, he was a presence. (Had that much-overworked adjective *charismatic* been applied to mere mortals in those primitive days of the mass media, it would surely have received a good workout just before the Robeson surname.) Given all that, his life did have tragic dimensions, albeit not of the sort that either he or Duberman had in mind.

A Writer's Reality

MARIO VARGAS LLOSA

Edited with an Introduction
by Myron Lichtblau



"Vargas Llosa writing on himself is downright and sensible. . . . Gives an agreeable impression of an affable personality behind the books."
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If Robeson and Duberman are to be believed, Robeson was a victim of the hysterical machinations of a fascist American state. If Robeson and Duberman are correct, Robeson was a paranoid who did have real enemies. Among them were the usual suspects, led by Harry Truman and J. Edgar Hoover. Less obvious, but upon reflection no less surprising, was the enmity of Walter White and Roy Wilkins of the NAACP.

To read Duberman uncritically would be to conclude that Robeson was also the victim of a timid black establishment, whose leaders were too concerned with their own precarious status and too anxious to demonstrate that they were Americans first and blacks second. Had Robeson seen fit to arrive at a similar set of priorities, he would not have been able to revel in the pariah status he shared with a DuBois.

To read Duberman without reflection would be to ignore the real tragedy of a man who happened to be his own worst enemy. The tragedy of Paul Robeson's life was not that he lost his celebrity status and his wealth. His tragedy resides in his having essentially denied himself a role in the drama of the American civil-rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Decisions he had made years earlier had seen to that.

Just when Paul Robeson might have been useful to a new generation of black leaders, he could be found parading across the Soviet Union. Just when he might have put a cap on an illustrious career, he found himself an entertainer without an appreciable audience in his own country. Had he lost that audience solely because of an overly aggressive FBI? Hardly. His audience left him because he had rejected his country. That audience included the rising generation of civil-rights activists to whom the name Paul Robeson meant little or nothing. If a Walter White or a Roy Wilkins felt compelled to distance himself from Robeson, a Martin Luther King, Jr., or a John Lewis could simply ignore him. By the 1960s the name Paul Robeson was as irrelevant and unimportant to them as it had become to official Washington.

There was, of course, a time when the name Robeson did evoke strong emotions on either side of the Cold War divide. But once he had made his choice, once he had made it clear which side he was on, Robeson began his slow, but inevitable, slide into obscurity. In attempting to rescue him from the dustbin of history, Duberman has only, if inadvertently, reminded his readers that the tempest over Robeson was really quite brief.

Paul Robeson was a stooge, a willing stooge, even a charismatic stooge, if you prefer, but a stooge nonetheless. In fact, this was a part he would play for a good share of his adult life. By all accounts Robeson was an actor who learned his lines well. This he managed to do whether he was playing Othello under the stage direction of Tony Richardson, promoting Soviet-American friendship under the wartime direction of Earl Browder, or giving vent to anti-American rantings under the Cold War direction of William Z. Foster.

Was Paul Robeson a member of the Communist party? Robeson denied it, and Duberman concurs with that denial. But the question itself is really beside the point. In the first place, Duberman concedes that Robeson was more useful to the party as a non-member. Secondly, there is no evidence that he ever dissented significantly from the American Communist party line on any serious point.

From at least 1939 on, Paul Robeson was a reliable member of a chorus of Soviet sympathizers. If he questioned Soviet policy at all, it was to voice muted criticism of Moscow's treatment of Soviet Jews. On a 1948 tour of Soviet Russia, Robeson "felt some uneasiness over his inability to locate Jewish friends from previous visits." Two in particular, Solomon Mikhoels and Itzik Feffer, drew his concern. Mikhoels, he was told, had mysteriously died in early January. Subsequently, Feffer appeared in Robeson's Moscow hotel room to tell his American friend (via hand gestures, given his suspicion of bugging) that Mikhoels had been murdered by the secret police and that Feffer himself anticipated execution (which came three years later). Robeson made no immediate response, but he did conclude his final concert with a pointed reference to Feffer specifically and to the plight of Soviet Jews generally. Then he sang, in Yiddish, a single encore, the Warsaw ghetto resistance song, "Zog Nit Kaynmal." The gesture was small, but significant.

Of course, upon his return to the United States, Robeson reverted to form—that is, to silence. Once on American soil he voiced no criticism of his holy land. After all, the major reason for Robeson's "conversion" to pro-

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Sovietism had been his conclusion that the Soviet Union was far more enlightened on minority issues than was the United States. Never once did he so much as entertain the notion that Moscow was running an old-fashioned colonial empire and running it more ruthlessly than earlier models. He simply knew that blacks had fared terribly in the United States. He simply assumed that blacks would fare much better in the Soviet Union.

In turn, it is Duberman's simple assumption that Paul Robeson was a legitimate and accepted spokesman for ordinary black Americans. But was he? Here was a man whose lovers were white (excluding, on occasion, his wife Essie and a small number of black Communist party functionaries). Here was an international jet-setter before the arrival of the jet age. Here was a self-made sophisticate, whose wife once dismissed all "small-towners" as "not our audience." Here was a black entertainer who scorned jazz as "decadent" and whose traveling manager insisted that "Mr. Robeson never sings the blues." Here was a lover who fell madly for white women and white Russians.

There were limits to his immersion in things African or in his own Afro-Americanism. "I am proud of my African descent," he told an interviewer in 1933, "but I am very far from being color-conscious in the sense that your true communist is class conscious. But then you must remember that I am essentially an artist and a cosmopolitan."

It was as an artist and a cosmopolitan that he embraced the good life, innumerable stars and starlets, and ultimately the Soviet Union. But in point of fact, Paul Robeson's greatest love affair was with himself. Whether he loved or feared his Soviet mentors is beside the point. He obeyed them and that was the only point they were interested in. One apparently passed the word to him that no liaison with a white woman should lead to a divorce from Essie or remarriage to a white woman. Obedient as always, Robeson did as he was told.

It is Duberman's contention that between 1940 and 1960 Robeson "evolved from an artist with a conscience to an artist committed to political action." Does he mean what he says? No longer a man of conscience, Robeson became a man of action? True enough, perhaps, but incomplete. This man of action was, of course, still an artist, but an artist under the

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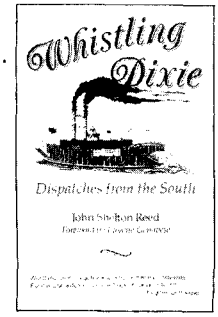
Dispatches from the South
John Shelton Reed
Foreword by Eugene Genovese



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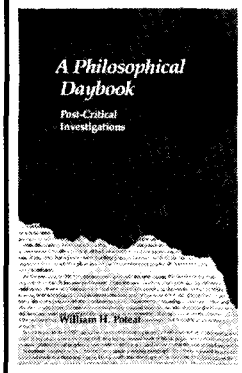

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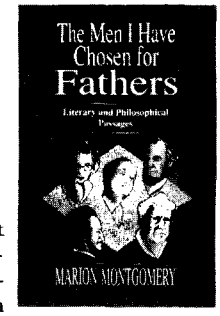

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direction of men of action who were unconcerned about the state of Paul Robeson's conscience.

It is Duberman's belief that it was the United States that "failed" this man of conscience well before he had made his decision to be a man of the Left. There might be some truth here, but is it not more accurate to state that the Soviet Union failed Paul Robeson? There were suggestions at the time that Robeson's 1961 suicide attempt (while in the Soviet Union) was triggered by his disillusionment with the current condition of the Soviet state, but Robeson—and Duberman—will have none of it.

What, ultimately, is sadder: the picture of a young and ambitious Paul Robeson, recent recipient of a Columbia law degree, having to be told by a partner in a prestigious New York law firm that his wealthy white clients would not tolerate a black lawyer trying their cases; or the picture of an older and ostensibly wiser Paul Robeson, recipient of the Stalin Peace Prize, having to spout the party line that the 1956 Hungarian freedom fighters were fascists who deserved repression or that Soviet slave camps were filled with "fascist prisoners who had murdered millions of Jewish people and who would have wiped out millions of the Negro people could they have gotten hold of them." Perhaps what is saddest of all is that Paul Robeson apparently believed his own hysterical rantings.

Duberman goes to great lengths to paint the United States of the Truman and Eisenhower years as a nation consumed with irrational anti-communism. On the scale of things, therefore, the denial of a passport to one Paul Robeson must have been a mere trifle lost among all the snooping, blacklisting, and Commie-bashing of those awful years. Yet one might wonder whether the "victims" of all that hysteria were not themselves subject to fits of irrationality all their own. So passionately did Robeson believe that American racism and imperialism constituted the gravest of threats to world peace that he could also believe (as of 1949) that the United States was ready to launch a preemptive nuclear war against the Soviet Union. Trusting man of the Left that he was, Robeson could only conclude that American leaders would behave in accordance with the imperialist urges that truly possessed them. Perhaps DuBois was right after all. Paul Robeson was someone who did place too much faith in ordinary mortal men. Had he only been willing to concede, publicly or privately, that his faith in mortal Soviet men was equally misplaced, he might well have saved himself an embarrassing middle, as well as an ignominious end, to what had started out to be such a promising life.

The Great Meltdown

TENURED RADICALS: HOW POLITICS HAS CORRUPTED OUR HIGHER EDUCATION. *By Roger Kimball. HarperCollins. $18.95.*

Reviewed by PETER SHAW

Over the past few years Roger Kimball's reports on the latest excesses of academic culture and the arts have lit up the pages of the *New Criterion* magazine. Gathered together in *Tenured Radicals*, the reports show Kimball to have been an intrepid anthropologist of contemporary ideas. He chronicled the academic establishment's shifting attempts to defend its own unremitting undermining of the values it was hired to transmit. He traveled to the forbidding antipodes of Yale's Whitney Humanities Center (twice), and a Williams College convocation featuring a panel on the "Crisis in the Humanities." He analyzed the pamphlet "Speaking for the Humanities," containing the establishment's disingenuous defense of its assault on values, and the volume *Reconstructing Individualism: Autonomy, Individuality, and the Self in Western Thought*, the papers of a conference at Stanford at which each of the elements named in the title was similarly assaulted.

Each of Kimball's explorations yielded the news that the humanities establishment now regularly worships the strange gods of anti-humanism while chanting a language and a logic of purposeful obfuscation. Kimball's essays included a detailed exposé of the razzle-dazzle literary theorist Stanley Fish and a devastating analysis of literary critic Geoffrey Hartman's desperate attempt to defend the leading deconstructionist and anti-humanist

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PETER SHAW is the author of *The War Against the Intellect: Episodes in the Decline of Discourse.*

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Paul de Man, when that critic turned out to have been a Nazi-collaborationist writer in 1941. Finally, Kimball analyzed the migration of literary anti-humanism and obscurantism into art through the pages of *October* magazine, and into architecture through "deconstructionism" (based on literary deconstruction even though denying the pedigree).

Some of Kimball's exquisitely chosen quotations can almost stand alone as refutations and disqualifications of the anti-humanist establishment. There is one from Niklas Luhmann, who explains that humanism is superannuated because we can no longer depend on any given conception of man. Upon encountering "somebody who looks and behaves like a human being," Luhmann preposterously writes, we have to ask ourselves: "How do we know that he is one?" Then there are those in the vanguard of the fight to do away with standards of excellence. Professor Houston Baker states openly: "I am one whose career is dedicated to the day when we have a disappearance of those standards." And there is the feminist, Lynda Bundtzen, who questions the status of writings thought great in previous ages because she rejects what she terms "values about individual genius." Just as important as genius in a writer, she believes, should be the desire "to celebrate the little things in women's lives . . . the small nurturing things that women do."

The ideas and attitudes of anti-humanism have been translated into action by a new generation of academic administrators. Always excellent guides to the pieties of any given period, these functionaries have correctly understood that the current pieties to be enforced are countercultural. Thus an administrator at the University of Pennsylvania alertly spotted and acted on a student panelist's tendency toward anti-orthodoxy. In a memo the young woman in question expressed her "deep regard for the individual and . . . desire to protect the freedoms of all members of society." Circling the passage and underlining the word *individual*, the administrator warned:

> This is a "RED FLAG" phrase today, which is considered by many to be RACIST. Arguments that champion the individual over the group ultimately privileges [*sic*] the "individuals" belonging to the largest or dominant group.

Moving on from the devaluing of the human being and individualism, Dean Hilda Hernandez-Gravelle of Harvard turned her attention to such mopping-up operations as "a ban on fifties nostaglia parties because racism was rampant in America in the 1950s." (This last example was culled by Kimball from a report by Robert R. Detlefsen in the *New Republic*.)

Useful as such straightforward language and actions from administrators may be in outlining the current academic ethos, the new terminologies and logics of professors remain the dominant vocabulary of the anti-humanist phenomenon. Kimball's essays provide keys to the latest trends. He explains, for example, that "nostalgia" is "a prime vice in the opinion of the academy these days." But Kimball also shows how simple, not to say simpleminded, the latest ideas prove to be when properly understood. The words used "to explain and to *praise* deconstructivist architecture," for example, are, like much else in current academic discourse, nothing more than reversals of values: "disturb, torture, interrogate, contaminate, infect." Deconstructivism reverses the aim of designing habitable, comfortable buildings. The theory, Kimball concludes, "is nothing more than a simpleminded inversion of every tried-and-true tenet about the function of architecture, an inversion that is finally as ridiculous as it is initially shocking."

Straightforward talk such as this has been in short supply in the period of contemporary obscurantism's triumph. Few have been able to penetrate its fog, and still fewer have been willing to risk facing the ever-ready accusation that opponents of deconstruction and its offshoots are crude reductionists. But Kimball neatly turns the tables by showing not only that it is reversing accepted values that amounts to a simpleminded reductionism, but also how rather than being heterodox, as they fancy themselves, the leading academics are actually purveyors of a comfortable orthodoxy.

One of Stanley Fish's "chief polemical points," for example, is (in Kimball's summary) "that we are imprisoned by our interpretive schemes and hence any attempt to achieve critical distance on those schemes is doomed to failure." Yet "although Professor Fish presents this idea as a hard-won discovery, in one version or another it has been gospel in the literary academy for several years." As Kimball puts it in another essay, we are treated to the

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comic spectacle (to employ Harold Rosenberg's memorable phrase) of this herd of independent minds, safely tenured within . . . ivy-covered walls, assuring each other in paper after paper, conference after conference, book after book that everything is a text, that reality is only a "construction," that truth is merely a sociological convention.

With exposés like this one, Kimball has made himself one of a select few to have successfully dymystified the new academic orthodoxy.

Philosophically, the orthodoxy was largely an update of ancient Greek Sophism, as Stanley Fish readily acknowledged. Politically, it boiled down to a vaguely utopian socialism. Kimball's description of what he calls "the *October* [magazine] syndrome" captures the political orthodoxy of most of those he writes about: "The important thing is the principle that any criticism of Stalinism or totalitarianism must be ritually followed up with a criticism of the United States or Western culture or capitalist . . . society." Kimball has been criticized in the *New Republic* by Louis Menand, who argues that "the real issue isn't the 'radicalism' of academic culture" but rather "the quality of the scepticism being purveyed." Yet Kimball is surely right that the skepticism in question reveals its political leftism at every turn, as Menand admits elsewhere in his review.

It might have been advisable, nevertheless, for Kimball to demonstrate exactly how, to adapt the subtitle of *Tenured Radicals*, specifically *Left* politics has "corrupted our higher education." A separate discussion of this question is missing, it seems, because the book consists of reprinted essays, with connecting matter, rather than an organized discussion of its subject. And because the essays more or less took issues as they came along, they naturally cannot produce a consecutive argument when strung together. Nor, as slightly rewritten, do they always sustain the greater portentousness Kimball has sometimes tried to add. In the *New Criterion*, for example, Kimball found that the willingness of academics "to jettison the tradition and intellectual principles that have nourished and given meaning to their disciplines" stimulated a "sobering thought." In the book version the same tendency has been puffed up to "a deeply foreboding sign" of the "ominousness of the current situation."

Whether the situation be sobering or foreboding or ominous, though, Kimball's description and analysis of it is all too persuasive. The academic world has come to be dominated by a congeries of pseudo-disciplines sharing the goal of undermining traditional culture. The purpose is ultimately to further political radicalism, albeit often in a muddleheaded, ineffectual manner. Roger Kimball has skillfully and tenaciously uncovered this purpose. Now it is to be hoped that some of the currently stilled adherents of reason within the academy will take heart from his intrepidity and begin to speak out. When that happens, the intellectual house of cards whose weaknesses he has pointed out will collapse as easily as Left totalitarian political systems built on many of the same delusions did in 1989.

Business Not As Usual

SCALE AND SCOPE: THE DYNAMICS OF INDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM. *By Alfred D. Chandler, Jr. Harvard University Press. $35.*

Reviewed by PETER BAIDA

Now generally considered the world's leading business historian, Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., has made a career of tackling huge subjects. Chandler, who is Isidor Strauss Professor of Business History, emeritus, at Harvard Business School, has built his reputation with works of Tolstoyan ambition and Darwinian attention to detail. In *Strategy and Structure* (1962), he presented landmark studies of General Motors, Du Pont, Standard Oil of New Jersey, and Sears, Roebuck in the first comprehensive, comparative analysis of the history of the large industrial enterprise in the United States. In *The Visible Hand* (1977), winner of both the Bancroft Prize and the Pulitzer Prize in history, he expanded his analysis, arguing that a "managerial revolution" has taken place in American business, that the "visible hand" of management has replaced the Invisible Hand of market mech-

PETER BAIDA is the author of *Poor Richard's Legacy: American Business Values from Benjamin Franklin to Donald Trump.*

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anisms in allocating and coordinating the flow of goods and services in many sectors of the economy, and that "a new type of capitalism" has emerged in the United States—a "managerial capitalism" whose dominant institution, "the most powerful institution in the American economy," is the giant enterprise administered by a "new subspecies of economic man—the salaried manager."

In *Scale and Scope*, Chandler offers the first comprehensive, comparative analysis of modern industrial capitalism that takes not a national but a global perspective. He focuses on three nations—the United States, Great Britain, and Germany—that produced two-thirds of the world's industrial output from the 1880s until the depression of the 1930s. In these nations he sees not one but three kinds of capitalism: "competitive managerial capitalism" in the United States, "personal capitalism" in Great Britain, and "cooperative managerial capitalism" in Germany. The differences help explain the relative decline of Britain as an economic power and the relative success of the United States and Germany.

Chandler's work is the antidote to the work of business journalists who offer, as their method of historical investigation, hunches reinforced by slanted anecdotes and spotty analysis. Chandler disdains this impressionistic approach. "Historical evidence can easily be found to support almost any set of hypotheses, propositions, or other generalizations concerning the growth and evolution of industries and enterprises. To be valid, historical analyses must be comparative." In *Scale and Scope*, Chandler compares the collective histories of the two hundred largest manufacturing enterprises in the United States, Great Britain, and Germany at three historical points—during World War I, at the end of the 1920s, and at the start of the post–World War II era. The result is a work in which, as he writes in *Strategy and Structure*, "complex decisions, actions, and events are not taken out of context and presented as mere illustrations . . . ; they are the data from which the generalizations are derived."

The generalizations that emerge from Chandler's comparative analysis are very broad indeed. In all three nations, he finds, a three-pronged investment in manufacturing, marketing, and management was the key entrepreneurial act in the creation of the modern industrial enterprise. The first step was the investment in production facilities "large enough to achieve the cost advantages of scale and scope." The second step was the investment in "product-specific marketing, distributing, and purchasing networks." The third step was the establishment of a managerial hierarchy "to supervise functional activities . . . , to coordinate the flow of goods through the processes, and to allocate resources for future production and distribution." All three investments were required "to achieve the competitive advantages of scale, scope, or both."

Economies of scale involved both production and distribution. In production, economies of scale mattered most in the capital-intensive industries where new processes were invented or existing ones greatly improved in the late nineteenth century—for instance, processes for the refining and distilling of sugar, petroleum, whiskey, and other liquids; for the refining and smelting of iron, steel, copper, and aluminium; and for the production of advanced industrial machinery and chemicals. In distribution, economies of scale mattered most in these same technologically advanced industries, where the manu-

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facturer "usually had a more accurate understanding of the specialized facilities, skills, and services required to distribute and market his specific products than did the wholesaler."

Economies of scope in production occurred in cases where a firm could use its organizational capabilities to pursue a strategy of product diversification. At Du Pont, for instance, the attempt to exploit economies of scope led the company into the production of celluloid products, paints and lacquers, pigments, dyes, and films, and later, into "synthetic materials, synthetic ammonia, gasoline additives, fast-drying lacquers, refrigerants, antifreeze, titanium dioxide pigments—as well as into nylon and neoprene." Economies of scope in distribution occurred in cases where a company could use its marketing system to handle more than a single product line. Meat packers such as Swift and Armour, for instance, used their refrigeration facilities to distribute not only meat but also butter, eggs, and fruit, while a company such as Sears, Roebuck, operating in hundreds of product lines, could handle as many as one hundred thousand orders a day from its Chicago plant by 1905.

Chandler's study yields important insights—not merely "an explanatory theory concerning the beginnings and continuing evolution of the modern industrial enterprise" but also an account of competing versions of capitalism in different nations. No nation other than the United States, Chandler observes, adopted a law comparable to the Sherman Antitrust Act before World War II. The basic difference between Germany and the United States was that industrial leaders in the United States competed "functionally and strategically for market share, while in Germany they often preferred to negotiate with one another to maintain market share at home and in some cases abroad. In the United States managerial capitalism was more competitive; in Germany it became more cooperative." Hence Chandler uses the term "cooperative managerial capitalism" to describe the brand of capitalism that evolved in modern Germany.

In Great Britain, on the other hand, capitalism was "personal" in the sense that "throughout the late nineteenth century British entrepreneurs continued to view their businesses in personal rather than organizational terms, as family estates to be nurtured and passed on to heirs." The result was economic disaster. In the dynamic new industries of the Second Industrial Revolution—the advanced mass-production industries that emerged in the 1880s and 1890s—Britain failed to make the triple investment in manufacturing, marketing, and management needed to compete at home and abroad. "In many of these new industries substantial tripartite investments were, indeed, made in Britain; but foreign, not British, enterprises made the investments. Foreign firms reaped the profits and developed the product-specific organizational capabilities." At bottom, the failure was a failure of culture. In many industries British entrepreneurs "enjoyed every source of market power against . . . competitors, except the capability to compete."

Chandler concludes with a long chapter that examines events since the end of World War II. Comparing Japan and the United States, he notes: "Japan had little in the way of a merger movement. There were almost no expansions into unrelated areas, no large-scale divestitures, no business of buying and selling companies, and no market for corporate control." In the United States, on the other hand, a strategy of "unbridled diversification" produced "an unprecedented number of mergers and acquisitions, followed . . . shortly by an unprecedented number of divestitures"—a churning that benefited no one except the investment bankers who pocketed huge fees for shuffling corporate assets. The rapidity of the American decline in national and international markets suggests that we ignore at our peril the need to maintain, renew, and expand the "organizational capabilities" that once made American industry the wonder and envy of the world.

Neither orthodox economists nor orthodox social scientists, Chandler observes, have developed theories that account for the role played by these organizational capabilities—"the collective physical facilities and human skills . . . organized within the enterprise"—as the "core dynamic" driving the growth of modern industrial capitalism. In the view of many economists, "the modern industrial enterprise is little more than an extractor of monopolistic or oligopolistic rents." In the view of many social scientists, the large industrial enterprise is a symbol of bureaucratic inefficiency. How, then, Chandler asks, can

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mainstream economists or social scientists account for the role played by these sluggish enterprises "in creating the most technologically advanced, fastest-growing industries of their day"?

Chandler's major works—*Strategy and Structure, The Visible Hand,* and *Scale and Scope*—are models of magisterial scholarship. Fifty years ago, such writers as Matthew Josephson and Allan Nevins engaged in endless debates about whether the leading figures in the history of American business were good guys or bad guys, robber barons or industrial statesmen. Writing under the influence of Max Weber, Werner Sombart, Joseph Schumpeter, and Talcott Parsons, Chandler has not resolved the debate so much as he has transcended it by shifting the focus from personalities to institutions. No scholar with a serious interest in the evolution of capitalism can afford to ignore his work. Chandler is the giant on whose shoulders the business historians of the twenty-first century will sit.

The Physics of Chicken Fat

LIFE'S DEVICES: THE PHYSICAL WORLD OF ANIMALS AND PLANTS. *By Steven Vogel. Princeton University Press. $45. Paper, $17.95.*

Reviewed by JOEL E. COHEN

Take an old dollar bill or other limp rectangle of paper, drape it over a finger, and place the finger against the edge of your lower lip. Then blow. The bill will lift up and extend horizontally away from your mouth. When you stop blowing, it will drop down again, suspended from your finger. This simple magic trick ("No hands, no strings attached!") can be advertised as a new way to raise money. For all but the very young, it demonstrates a physical law, attributed to Daniel Bernoulli (1700–1782), that keeps aloft bats, birds, and butterflies as well as airplanes, gliders, and helicopters.

Bernoulli's principle shapes biology as much as technology, sometimes in surprising ways. Prairie dogs use it to help them survive underground. Prairie dogs dig burrows that may extend three meters (ten feet) deep and fifteen meters (fifty feet) from entrance to exit. Without forced ventilation, not enough oxygen would reach prairie dogs in the bottom of the burrow to keep them alive. So prairie dogs build the entrance to the burrow in a different shape from the exit. One is often a low mound with a broad opening, the other a high cone with a narrow vent. When winds blow over the plains of North America, the air passes more rapidly over the cone than the mound. The difference in pressure pulls air through the burrow, providing the underground inhabitants with nature's air conditioning.

Bernoulli's principle asserts roughly that the faster a fluid flows over a surface, the less pressure it exerts against that surface. In an airplane wing moving forward through air, the bulge on the top surface forces the air above the wing to travel further, and therefore faster, than the air below the wing. As a result, the air pressure is lower above the wing than it is below it. The same kind of pressure difference that lifts the wing also lifts the dollar bill and pulls air through prairie dogs' burrows.

In *Life's Devices: The Physical World of Animals and Plants* Steven Vogel, a professor of zoology at Duke University, describes this and hundreds of other unexpected facts with affection, grace, and good humor. The theme of his arcane and familiar examples is that physical principles set the boundaries on what living organisms can do, and that living organisms, with impressive creativity, exploit nearly every possibility within those boundaries.

For example, have you ever wondered why chicken fat is heavily concentrated in and under the skin while cattle marble fat into their meat? (To be honest, I hadn't, but once Vogel pointed it out, the difference was obvious. How could I have overlooked it?) Physics determines that the volume of similarly shaped animals increases roughly in proportion to the cube, or third power, of their length, while their surface area and cross-sectional area increase roughly in proportion to the square, or second power, of their length. Since smaller animals (like chickens) have a higher ratio of surface area to body volume, and therefore suffer more from heat loss to the cooler surrounding air than do

✪ JOEL E. COHEN is a professor at Rockefeller University, New York.

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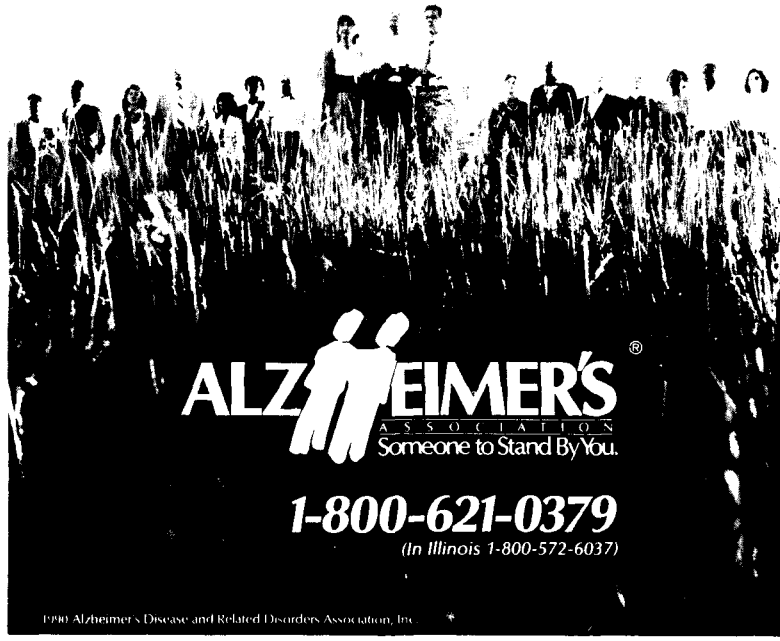
larger animals (like cattle), chickens assign their fat double duty, as energy storage and as surface insulation, while cattle have less need to line their surface with fat. The argument is valid as a first approximation even though cattle and chickens differ slightly in shape. The argument also explains why human babies are more vulnerable to winter chill than human adults, but warm up faster once they're indoors.

A similar argument explains why, when the skeletons of a cat and an elephant are drawn the same height, side by side, as they are in *Life's Devices*, the elephant has dramatically thicker leg bones, though the lengths of the legs are roughly similar. The reason is that the weight a leg bone can support is roughly proportional to its cross-sectional area, while the weight it needs to support is roughly proportional to the cube of its length. Therefore, as Galileo pointed out in 1637, the leg bones must be proportionally much thicker in big animals than in small. And so they are.

Why do hot dogs and other sausages in artificial casings usually split longitudinally when they are overcooked? *Life's Devices* gives a very intuitive explanation in terms of Laplace's law. Why do people switch from walking to jogging at a certain speed of locomotion? *Life's Devices* tells why, and tells how to calculate your very own Froude number (named after the British engineer and naval architect William Froude, 1810–1879), so that you can predict the speed at which you switch. The necessary physics is presented in the gentlest possible way, with outrageous puns and no formulas requiring more than eighth-grade algebra (which is even reviewed in an appendix, in case you've forgotten).

In *Life's Devices*, Froude's number, Laplace's law, Bernoulli's principle, and many more physical ideas illuminate facts about the entire range of organisms from bacteria to bactrians and back. "There are lessons in nature that might be applied to our [technological] designs," Vogel writes. "Looking at life's devices provides a comparison between our human technology and the only other of which we have any knowledge." This song of a man madly in love with the physical view of biology will enrich and enliven your everyday view of both living nature and human technology.

The loneliness of coping with Alzheimer's disease is getting less lonely every day.



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The Reader Replies

Joseph Campbell

Mary R. Lefkowitz's article on Joseph Campbell ("The Myth of Joseph Campbell," Summer 1990) shows me that she never made any attempt to understand the message Joseph Campbell was trying to make. Indeed, this conclusion is endorsed by the final paragraph, which reads: "But although as an expression of religious belief it is perhaps an improvement over what some of us learned in Sunday school, no one should hope to find in it an authoritative guide to any religion other than Campbell's own."

If I understood Mr. Campbell correctly, he was trying to show that the myths of yore were merely symbols of the truth and were not meant to be taken literally as modern man has done so fatally. With few exceptions, most of the religions of today originated at a time in our history when civilization as we know it had hardly begun. The wise men of the Middle East didn't even know that the earth is round and that it revolves around the sun. Science as we know it was unknown. How could a body rise to a so-called heaven, defying all scientific principles? Moreover, if all religions believe in one god, how can such a god be a Jew, a Christian, a Muslim? Mr. Campbell tried to show that the early prophets spoke in idiom, not in words to be taken literally. As Mr. Campbell put it: A myth is a mask of God.

In *The Power of Myth*, Mr. Moyers, in writing about the author, writes in his introduction: "When he said that myths are clues to our deepest spiritual potential, able to lead us to delight, illumination, and even rapture, he spoke as one who had been to the places he was inviting others to visit." Truer words were never spoken. Mary R. Lefkowitz makes light of Mr. Campbell's phrase "follow your bliss." It has been said that each of us plays a particular part in this life, a part like no other. Inspiration for this comes from within. If Mr. Campbell chose to call this "bliss," so be it—a delightful way to put it. Whatever the name, his advice is completely valid.

Let me go back to Mary R. Lefkowitz's last sentence again. If Mr. Campbell has a religion of his own, it is one we could all afford to follow. All existing religions need to be replaced and Mr. Campbell's inspiring words could well be followed. There is only one God, Divine Being, Divine Mind—take your choice—and each one of us is a "chip off the old block." We all belong to the same family. That was the message of Mr. Campbell.

J. R. G. HARRIS
Southbury, Connecticut

Mary R. Lefkowitz's criticisms of Joseph Campbell's interpretation of myth are substantially on target, and I myself have made comparable ones in my book, *Joseph Campbell: An Introduction* (New American Library, 1990). But Lefkowitz is, I think, wrong to characterize Campbell's view of myth as Christian, sexist, and even Jungian.

First, unlike mainstream Christians, Campbell espouses the oneness of god and humanity. Indeed, he castigates conventional Christians for separating the two. Unlike the bulk of even mystical Christians—Teresa and John of the Cross, for example—Campbell preaches the oneness of soul and body, of the immaterial and material worlds. Campbell's brand of mysticism is extrovertive, monistic, and world-affirming. Ironically, he invokes Gnostic Christianity as alone akin to his views—ironic because Gnosticism in most of its forms could scarcely be more introvertive, dualistic, or world-rejecting.

Second, unlike other theorists of hero myths—notably, Otto Rank *(The Myth of the Birth of the Hero)* and Lord Raglan *(The Hero)*—Campbell cites female as well as male heroes—even if, as Lefkowitz rightly observes, far more male heroes than female ones. Indeed, Campbell's own hero pattern logically commits him to *exclusively* male heroes: the hero mates with a supreme female god and bests a supreme male one. At the same time the heart of heroism for Campbell is "genderless" not only because, as Lefkowitz herself notes, the real journey for Campbell is spiritual rather than physical but, even more, because the hero, upon returning, recognizes that he—or she—need never have left home in the first place: because of Campbell's variety of mysticism the realm to which the hero treks turns out to be identical with the home he left behind. Because there is no distinct, higher domain to seek, all striving is in vain. Surrender, not conquest, is heroic—not just at the end of life, as Lefkowitz grants, but throughout life. Not in *Hero with a Thousand Faces* but only in other works—above all the four-volume *Masks of God*—does Campbell, reversing himself, associate heroism with striving and with masculinity. But even there

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he usually *opposes* heroism *as* aggressive. Only in *Masks: Creative Mythology* does he *approve* of striving. In *Hero* he advocates for males and females alike the passivity that Lefkowitz takes him to be limiting to females.

Third and last, unlike Jung, Campbell does seek only the similarities among myths and does disregard the differences—this despite the seeming differences he is drawing among primitive, Oriental, Occidental, and modern mythologies. But Campbell's extreme comparativism is not Jung's. Where for Campbell the archetypal meaning of myth is the sole one, for Jung it is only the preliminary one. Jung is as interested in the particularities of each culture, and indeed person, as Lefkowitz herself. In other respects as well—in his mysticism, for example—Campbell is anything but a Jungian.

ROBERT A. SEGAL
Professor of Religious Studies
Louisiana State University
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

MARY R. LEFKOWITZ replies: To J. R. G. Harris, Amen.

I'm pleased that someone who knows Campbell's works so well as Professor Segal thinks I'm substantially "on target." But I didn't say that Campbell's "view of myth was Christian, sexist, or even Jungian," but rather that he took some of his most popular and appealing ideas from Christian writers and from Jung, and that in certain aspects his notion of heroism didn't grant much initiative to women. Cf. Professor Segal in his recent book: " . . . Campbell ignores heroines" (p. 34); "If [Campbell] was a Jungian it is because he shared Jung's view of myth" (p. 244). Certainly as a theologian, Campbell was comprehensively eclectic. But my primary intent was to discuss Campbell's value as a scholar of mythology; and here I can only reiterate that "no one should hope to find in [his mythology] an authoritative guide to any religion other than Campbell's own"—whatever that was. I can't help thinking of the phrase Hugh Trevor-Roper once used of Toynbee: "the religion of mish-mash."

False Martyr

Hugh Murray's review of Stephen J. Whitfield's *A Death in the Delta: The Story of Emmett Till* (THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Summer 1990) is shocking, not because of his comments on Whitfield's work, but rather because of Murray's attitude on murder.

The documentary "Eyes on the Prize" indicates that Emmett Till's offense was to say "Hi babe" to white store clerk Carolyn Bryant. A recent review in the *American Journal of Legal History* of *A Death on the Delta* states that Till was accused of whistling at Bryant, and he may not have done that. Murray claims that Till made "advances" to Carolyn Bryant, put his hands on her waist, and propositioned her in a lewd manner before he returned to his friends.

If Murray is correct, then fourteen-year-old Till committed the crime of assault. Carolyn Bryant had the right to go to the white prosecutor and ask him to present a case before the white judge seeking the conviction of Emmett Till by twelve white jurors. There can be no doubt that in Mississippi in 1955 Mrs. Bryant's legally protected interest would have been fully vindicated by the Mississippi judicial system.

No complaint was made, however. Instead, Carolyn's husband, Roy Bryant, and his brother-in-law J. W. Milam acted upon the traditional principle that a black person had no rights that a white person was bound to respect (including the right to live). They abducted Till and, in Murray's words, "beat, mutilated, and murdered Emmett Till." Even though Bryant and Milam, after their acquittal by a state jury, admitted that they murdered Till, Murray refers to their "alleged" crime while expressing no doubt about the certainty of Till's supposed assault.

After noting that Bryant and Milam did not pay the price of murderers, Murray indicates that they did suffer harms by having to leave the state and change employment. While acknowledging that this is not a sufficient punishment for murder, Murray asked "but did they deserve execution or life imprisonment?" He clearly implies that they did not deserve either of those penalties. This is apparently so because "Till, too, was wrong or, at any rate, was looking for trouble."

An individual who parks his or her car with unlocked doors and keys in the ignition at a busy urban center may be "asking for trouble." But the person who takes that car is no less committing theft than Bryant and Milam committed murder in the case of Emmett Till. The law in the state of Mississippi stood ready to vindicate Mrs. Bryant's legal interest. Bryant and Milam's acts to punish Till were not only illegal but also disproportional to Till's alleged offense. Bryant and Milam's action warranted the penalties that Mississippi provided for murder, as much as any other murder.

Murray's second major theme is akin to the first: the northern media improperly converted Till into a martyr. The impropriety of that effort stems from Murray's view that Till was not completely innocent. But Emmett Till was completely innocent in two important senses. First, like every other person living under the United States Constitution, he was presumed innocent unless and until his guilt was proven beyond a reasonable doubt. Emmett Till died a completely innocent person: he was never accorded his right to have the facts of what took place on August 24, 1955, adjudicated in a court of law.

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Second, and more importantly even under the Murray account, Emmett Till was completely innocent of any action that would warrant his brutal murder. The crime of assault cannot be reasonably considered a capital offense.

While the concerns Mr. Murray raises about Emmett Till and his background might be relevant to inquiry on the effect of this information on the formation of public opinion, it has absolutely no relevance to the legal or moral culpability of Till's murderers. In spite of Murray's condemnation of the murder, his opinion of Till as a "sexually threatening teenager" coupled with his view that the murderers did not deserve the punishment Mississippi specified for murder, cheapens the value of human life (including Emmett Till's) and accepts racism as a basis for murder.

Mr. Murray professes concern lest history be "blurred and truth lost." His review does both. It blurs the historical fact that Emmett Till was murdered without moral or legal justification and it loses sight of the truth that those who confessed to the murder escaped punishment by the state.

RICHARD L. AYNES
Professor of Law
University of Akron
Akron, Ohio

Robert Patterson, who, in the 1950s was the secretary of the Citizens' Council—known to its critics as the "white-collar Klan"—was interviewed in Howell Raines's *My Soul is Rested: The Story of the Civil Rights Movement in the Deep South.* Of the Emmett Till case, he expressed this opinion:

"Over the years, we've felt that we have been mistreated by the nation's news media. They've come down here in swarms for years. I think it all started probably with a case of a young Negro boy named Emmett Till killed in Mississippi for offending some white woman . . . that made every newspaper on the face of the earth. . . . And then they found out that Emmett Till's soldier-hero father was hanged in Italy by Dwight D. Eisenhower for the crime of double murder and rape."

Associating fourteen-year-old Till with his father offers an opportunity to discredit a victim of racial hatred by linking him to acts of sexual hatred. We might find such efforts understandable when we consider the source, a person intimately involved in preventing the achievement of civil rights goals. But how do we explain that his tired response appears as a commentary in a recent (Summer 1990) issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR? I am referring to Hugh Murray's "False Martyr," a response to *A Death in the Delta: The Story of Emmett Till.*

According to Mr. Murray, Emmett Till is a false martyr because his actions toward Carolyn Bryant demonstrate that he was not an innocent victim, but rather a "sexually threatening teenager." He does not remind us that Bryant apparently chased Till out of the door with a gun. And, later in his article, he devotes much space to the issue of rape. How does Murray segue from Till's gruesome mutilation and murder to a discussion of rape? By telling us that Till's father had been executed during World War II "because he had been judged guilty of raping two Italian women and killing a third."

Murray concludes a superficial discussion of rape with this statement: "Unfortunately, crime statistics indicate that rapists, of all races, are all too real." Yes, but whom do they rape? What does this tell us specifically of the Till case? And what current mythologies about rape are perpetuated by this generalization?

When white slave owners raped their enslaved black women, they were not seen as a rapists. When white women importuned black women to submit to their white husbands' sexual exploitation so that the husbands would not obtain white mistresses, the husbands were not seen as rapists. Perhaps Emmett Till's women relatives had been some of the thousands of women who left the South in an attempt to avoid sexual exploitation. (On this, see Paula Giddings's *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America.*) When white male employers assault black domestic workers, they have not been seen as rapists. As far as I know, no white man has ever been executed for raping a black woman.

Though Murray tells us that rapists of all races exist, he does not qualify this statement by telling us that most rapes are intra-racial. In fact, most rapes are *familial.* Marital rape is now thought to be the most frequent form of rape. (See Diana E. H. Russell, *Rape in Marriage* and David Finkelhor and Kersti Yllo, *License to Rape: Sexual Abuse of Wives.*) But husbands who rape their wives—according to the many states that have not criminalized marital rape—are not rapists either. Add to the frequency of marital rape, father-daughter rape, and we see just how ingenuous Murray's discussion of rape is. The specter of Till's father, an accused interracial rapist, is allowed to descend on his teenage son, and we walk away from the review associating Emmett with interracial rape. Thus do we fail to distinguish precisely how the black rapist mythology is played out in the racial dramas of this racist country.

Murray's article is offered as if it is saying something new. Instead, it recycles the position others have taken. When racism and sexism intersect,

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powerful forces of distortion are at work. Murray's indulgent article is one recent example.

CAROL J. ADAMS
Richardson, Texas

HUGH MURRAY replies: Professor Aynes writes that I accept racism as a basis for murder. I do not. Yet, nowhere in his letter does Professor Aynes reveal any awareness of class difference in America. He asks, if Till were guilty of assault, why did not Carolyn Bryant request that the prosecutor press charges against Till? That's what law professors would do.

But is that what poor people in Mississippi would do—be they black or white? Is that what most people in East Harlem or Watts or Appalachia would do? Most would not, because most poor people, of whatever race, neither seek, nor find, justice in the courts.

Furthermore, to go to trial in the mid-1950s alleging an assault of a sexual nature would have heaped additional humiliation upon Mrs. Bryant. At that time many assumed that women were somehow responsible for such acts. And in a racist state, as Mississippi then was, to charge Till, a black, would have been the ruination of Bryant's reputation. Carolyn Bryant would have subjected herself to innumerable additional insults and assaults from people of all colors.

Indeed, Till's initial assault was implicitly a call for his friends to do the same. The only honorable recourse for Mr. Bryant and his relative was to tackle Till directly. In punishing Till, they clearly went beyond reasonable chastisement. Consequently, they were charged and tried for murder. They were also exonerated by a jury of their peers. Thus, legally, they are as innocent as Till. But the reality is more complex. Roy Bryant, J. W. Milam, and Emmett Till were guilty in various degrees. And it was Till who set the tragedy in motion.

I do not declare Roy Bryant and Milam heroes. They went beyond reasonable punishment in mutilating and murdering Till. Still, I do not believe they deserved life imprisonment or death sentences for trying to prevent further assaults upon their family.

Professor Aynes appears to be more interested in the law than in justice, in the ivory tower than in reality. Because we have had so many judges with similar views, the crime rate is much higher today than in 1955, when the debate over Emmett Till began.

Carol Adams begins her letter by linking my position to that of Robert Patterson, of the "white-collar Klan," the White Citizens' Council. His views are suspect because he was "intimately involved in preventing the achievement of civil rights goals." Well, I was involved in promoting civil rights goals. After attending a training conference with forty others at which Dr. King participated, I was arrested in the first lunch-counter sit-in with CORE in my native New Orleans. Later I taught at black universities in the South until blacklisted as a consequence of my sympathizing with a black student protest strike. Indeed, at one point I was followed in my car by a police helicopter. And it is because I was involved in the civil rights movement that I resent attempts by Black Nationalists and trendy Democratic historians to begin discussion of the non-violent civil rights movement with Emmett Till.

Much of Adams's letter is irrelevant. Of course, black slave women could be raped during the era of slavery, and it would not be deemed rape. But that was, after all, in a long-ago era, when, according to Supreme Court Justice Taney, blacks "had no rights which the white man was bound to respect." The reality was hardly as sweeping as the Court's ruling, for in the North blacks struggled both to expand their rights and to abolish slavery in the South. Even in the South, Free People of Color often excelled in commerce and culture. The slave system was destroyed in the Civil War, in which blacks *and* whites fought to save the union and abolish slavery. Slavery is not pertinent to the events in Mississippi nearly a century later. And threatened assaults upon domestic workers provide the theme of *Pamela*, one of the first novels in the English language, written far from the American South.

Nor do I accept Adams's propaganda about rape in marriage. Both rape and marriage are culturally and politically defined. In some cultures marriage begins with the ritualized kidnap and rape of the bride. Moreover, we have seen in unhappy marriages how some women have stooped to falsely accuse their husbands of child abuse so that the men would be denied access to the children. Certainly, such wives would also cry "rape," if the law permitted. Indeed, some feminists would probably cry rape at the first consummation of marriage. Thus, there are real grounds for denying angry wives the right to charge rape against their husbands, as it would be one more club with which to threaten husbands during divorce. The marriage contract, willingly agreed to by both partners, may rightly preclude the notion of unwilling sex. Of course, I do not expect to persuade Ms. Adams, the author of a feminist-vegetarian critique.

I do not deny that blacks may be falsely accused of rape. I have written a number of articles—two published in a black scholarly journal—about the Scottsboro cases in which white women falsely accused blacks of rape. Recently at a college in New York an unidentified white female charged a black athlete with rape (she is unidentified due to feminist pressure so that the public cannot weigh the credibility and character of the accuser). When many witnesses proclaimed to the media that the alleged rapist was not on campus when the rape

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occurred, charges against the young athlete were dropped. Conversely, Tawana Brawley falsely accused white men of raping her, and her story, headlines for six months, was used by the liberal media as evidence of pervasive "racism" against blacks. "What current mythologies about rape [and race] are perpetrated" by the liberal media's gullibility in the Brawley case?

And Till? If Whitfield's book is accurate, based chiefly on William Bradford Huie's account, then Till was a "sexually threatening teenager." Whitfield dismisses the facts he himself records with the word "prank." Yet, a friend of the Central Park "wilders" described that incident as "a prank that got out of hand." Some involved in the wilding-rape were fourteen and fifteen years old. If the female jogger had had access to a pistol to fend off the wilders, as Bryant did with Till, the liberal media would undoubtedly then refer to the wilders as pranksters, rather than sexually threatening teenagers.

Till was only fourteen, but he was big enough to wear his father's ring, thus associating himself with the elder Till. At 160 pounds, the muscular teen was considerably taller and stronger than Carolyn Bryant. Moreover, he had friends looking on. Clearly, he aimed to embarrass her, to threaten her, to gain esteem, and, implicitly, to encourage his friends to do the same to her, or more. When he saw her pistol, Till halted his advances with a whistle. If Till were not punished, the threats would escalate. Even if Carolyn Bryant had been black, Till was asking for trouble. Furthermore, her husband—of whatever color—could be expected to do something to punish Till. And poor people, like the Bryants, would hardly go to court to extract justice. In punishing him, Bryant's husband and other(s) went too far; they should not have murdered Till. But that does not elevate Till to a martyr.

La Belle Américaine

In 1986 I bought my first car, a 1984 Honda Civic with 21,000 miles on it. Soon afterwards, we took our first long trip together. While tooling along a dark Louisiana interstate, I began to believe, and then fear, that my gas gauge was broken. The odometer would count off the miles, but the gauge never seemed to move. Eventually, the gauge did reach "empty." I stopped at a gas station, did a quick calculation, and discovered that I had been getting nearly 40 miles to the gallon. Now, *that's* freedom.

If Leonard Kriegel requires a large car, I wouldn't deny it to him. But the freedom that he celebrates in "*La Belle Américaine*: A Modern Love Story" (THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Summer 1990) is one Americans have felt, to our sorrow, throughout history. They might have been bison hunters, loggers, strip miners, or automakers, but the shortsighted, wasteful—truly, childish—attitude was and is the same: *it's a big country; we'll never run out of (name your favorite finite resource—oil, timber, clean water, bison); the Earth can absorb all attacks.* Those of us who are pleased that today's cars are smaller, cleaner, and more fuel efficient than they once were are not "Luddites of the imagination." We don't fear technology; we have a healthy respect for its power, its possibilities—and its dangers. Nor are our imaginations stunted; we simply try to imagine a technology that serves humanity while doing the least possible damage to the planet upon which humanity depends.

CHRISTOPHER COMBEST
Old Bridge, New Jersey

LEONARD KRIEGEL replies: Small Japanese cars are certainly more fuel efficient than oversized American gas guzzlers. They are also less comfortable and more dangerous. My 1978 Delta 88 was succeeded by a 1984 Delta 88. About a year ago, an errant flagman on Twelfth Avenue in Manhattan sent me banging into a 1988 Honda Civic. The damage to my bumper was $250; the Honda absorbed $5,000 in damage. There are all sorts of economies of scale.

It's nice of Mr. Combest not to "deny" me a big car. Allow me, in return, to remind him that my essay was not a sermon but a eulogy for the big American gas-guzzler (although I can't resist pointing out that those same Japanese automakers who gave us the 40-mile-per-gallon Honda Civic are now selling us "high-performance" cars named Lexus and Infiniti, whose appeal is remarkably similar to what the much-maligned Detroit automakers offered drivers of my generation). But the real argument between us has to do with his scorn for "it's a big country," a psychology to which he attributes America's "shortsighted" and "wasteful" squandering of its natural resources. Even as Saddam Hussein and big oil stick it to us, I'm not quite so sure as he is that bigger is worse. That idea of personal freedom that sent me into the American landscape was tied—however unfashionable it may be to voice such heresy today—to the belief that an individual had the power to change his own destiny. My own life seems richer for the "it's a big country" psychology. And while bigger is certainly not better, smaller can often seem both crabbed and self-righteous.

William Wordsworth

When Evelyn Toynton says, "No other great poet ever wrote as much boring, flat-footed verse as Wordsworth," I cannot help but wonder if this bias

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against the poet has influenced her review of *William Wordsworth: A Life* by Stephen Gill, which appeared in the Spring 1990 SCHOLAR.

When she describes Dr. Gill as an academic who at times "seems not to grasp the implications of what he is telling us," I suspect he is very much aware but is allowing the reader to draw his own conclusions. Because he presents unflattering facts about Wordsworth without judgment, does that mean he is unaware of their implications? Because he has failed to portray Wordsworth with sentimentality, does that diminish the power of the biography? I think not.

Ms. Toynton has used this review to attack Wordsworth, the biography, and Dr. Gill as well, labeling him an academic who cannot be expected "to exercise simple common sense in his judgments, or to have a lively gift for description."

For me, whatever valid criticism Ms. Toynton has to make is lost in the viciousness of her attack. Ironically, she is condemning Dr. Gill for his restraint.

BEVERLY A. MCCOLLEY
Virginia Beach, Virginia

EVELYN TOYNTON replies: I find it puzzling that Ms. McColley should have inferred from my review of Stephen Gill's biography that I lack appreciation for Wordsworth's poetry. When I said, "No other great poet ever wrote as much boring, flat-footed verse as Wordsworth"—a point that has been made so often it is virtually a commonplace of literary criticism—I was explicitly acknowledging that in his best work he is of course a great poet, something I referred to repeatedly in the course of my review. My "bias against" Wordsworth, if I have one, is wholly against the man and not the poet, and this "bias," too, is shared by innumerable others. (Among his contemporaries, for example, not only the fiery Hazlitt but also such gentler souls as Keats, Lamb, and Southey were offended by his egotism and pomposity.) But it's absurd to assume that regarding Wordsworth as a prig is tantamount to dismissing his genius. I suspect that, like me, many people who love Wordsworth's poetry can't quite rid themselves of the (admittedly unreasonable) feeling that anyone who could write "Tintern Abbey" and the "Immortality Ode" and "Michael" and the *Prelude* ought to have been an entirely wonderful man. So the indignation at his character flaws may be in inverse proportion to the affection for his work.

It is unclear to me from Ms. McColley's letter whether she has actually read Stephen Gill's biography or is simply defending it because she doubts the validity of my "attack." If she has read the book, I wonder why she assumes that its author "is very much aware" of the implications of the "unflattering facts" he tells us about Wordsworth "but is allowing the reader to draw his own conclusions," when Dr. Gill draws so many other conclusions about Wordsworth's conduct within the book. Even more damaging to her argument, he comes right out and says that "As a husband, father, brother, and provider Wordsworth was rarely selfish"—shortly before relating how the poet left his wife alone with a newborn baby and a dangerously sick infant to go off on a pleasure jaunt. It seems to me that saying Dr. Gill "appears not to grasp the implications of what he is telling us" was a rather mild way of stating the case.

André Gide

I have enjoyed nothing in your issue for Autumn 1990 more than John Weightman's essay "André Gide and the Homosexual Debate." On page 600 Professor Weightman mentions that "according to gossip" the model for the character of Count Robert de Passavant, the fashionable man of letters in *Les Faux-Monnayeurs*, was Cocteau, but adds that "the character seems very different from Cocteau." The gossip I have heard identifies him with Montherlant, who seems to fit the bill a good deal better.

HUGH LLOYD-JONES
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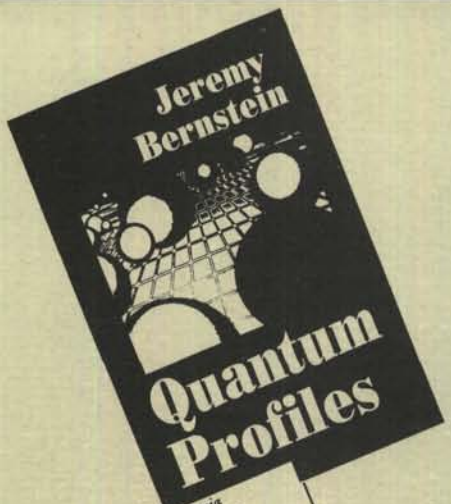

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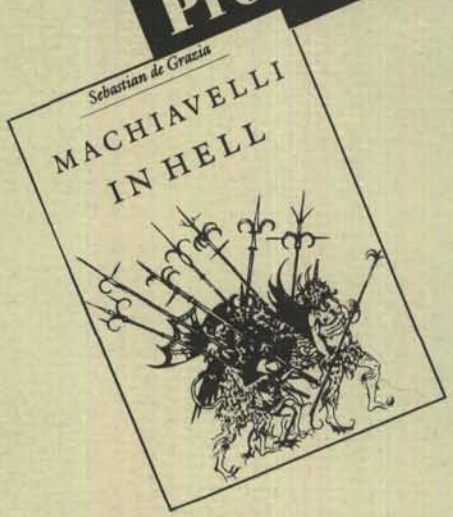

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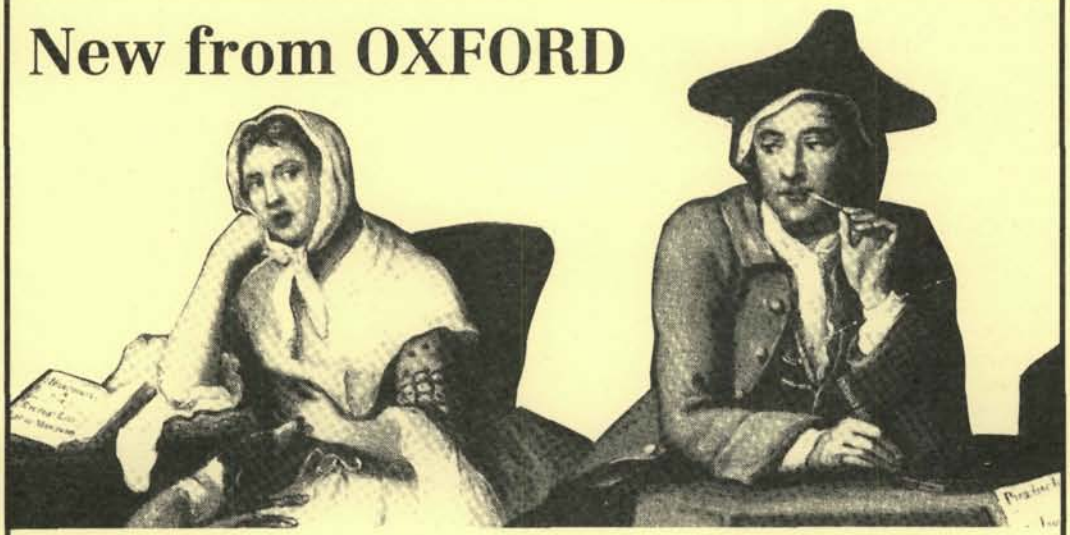

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